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# A HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF THE NETHERLANDS

By PETRUS JOHANNES BLOK, Ph.D.

PROFESSOR OF DUTCH HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LEYDEN

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TO BE COMPLETED IN FIVE PARTS.

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Parts I, II, and III translated by RUTH PUTNAM and Parts  
IV and V by OSCAR A. BIERSTADT.

PART I. From the Earliest Times to the Beginning of  
the 15th Century.

PART II. The Gradual Centralization of Power, and  
the Burgundian Period.

PART III. The War of Independence, 1568-1621.

PART IV. Frederick Henry, John de Witt, William III.

PART V. Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries.



# HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF THE NETHERLANDS

BY

PETRUS JOHANNES BLOK

Professor of Dutch History in the University of Leyden

PART V.

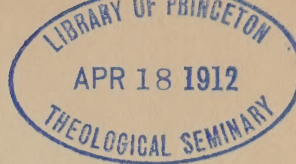
EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES

TRANSLATED BY OSCAR A. BIERSTADT

WITH FIVE MAPS

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS  
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## PREFACE

WITH this volume is completed a work which was begun by me more than twenty years back. I realise that it has not been practicable for me to maintain uniformly throughout the narrative the high standard of accomplishment in historical comprehensiveness and in literary form which in my youthful ardour it had been my hope to secure, but I may hope that my book may serve to add to the knowledge of the history of the Dutch people not only with my fellow-countrymen, but with the circles of English-speaking readers on both sides of the Atlantic for whom this edition has been prepared.

I hope in fact to have accomplished more than this. It has been my purpose to bring into our national history the results of scientific research and investigation, which results have hitherto been scattered through numerous separate volumes and periodicals. The plan of my history provides for a consecutive narrative of occurrences, or at least of the most noteworthy occurrences, the record of which has been critically examined and my conclusions in regard to which are based in part upon the work of others who have written before me.

From time to time it becomes necessary for the historian to stand still in the work of the investigation of historical details, large and small, and, in taking a general survey over the centuries, to arrive at some estimate or conclusion as to the results actually attained. It is such a survey that on the threshold of the twentieth century I have myself attempted. Others will come in their turn,

and, while extending their own investigations, will, I trust, find value in the material put into shape by myself. In this way, the final store of knowledge will increase not only in comprehensiveness but in thoroughness, and we shall at least take one step nearer to the ideal of final historic truth. Such an ideal we are always hoping to discern in the remote distance, although we may feel that it will never be fully realised.

At the close of an undertaking which has called for a large part of my active life, I admit a feeling somewhat akin to the "sober melancholy" felt by Gibbon on the completion of his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. It is like taking an everlasting leave of an old and an agreeable companion; a sadness from which none of us is spared, and which must be constantly repeated as we journey along the path of life.

P. J. B.

October, 1911.



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HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF THE  
NETHERLANDS







# HISTORY OF THE DUTCH PEOPLE

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## CHAPTER I

### THE REPUBLIC IN THE WAR OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION

THE king-stadtholder had made every preparation for the new European war that under the lead of England, the republic, and the emperor was to be begun in order to frustrate once more France's designs upon dominion over the world. Europe could not allow the aged Louis XIV. by placing his grandson on the Spanish throne to bring the globe-embracing Spanish territory under French supremacy or in any case to make ready the union of the power of France and Spain in one hand. The stipulation that both crowns should never be on one head seemed to exclude the possibility of a union, but experience had proved that such conditions were valid only when the future heir lacked the strength to break them with impunity. Not alone was the political equilibrium of Europe menaced by the accession of Philip of Anjou to the throne of Spain. Commercial interests were closely connected with political interests. Since Colbert had shown the possibilities of France as a commercial power, following the path marked by Sully under Henry IV., since France had sought transmarine possessions in east and west, in Louisiana and Canada, on the Antilles and in Guiana, in Hither India and Senegal,

on Bourbon and Madagascar, since it had endeavoured to create a navy and a mercantile marine, it had become a rival not to be despised by the two great maritime powers of the seventeenth century. The trade of the latter would be endangered, whenever France, closely connected with Spain, should be assured of commercial advantages there and in Italy, in the more distant parts of the Mediterranean, and in Spanish America, hitherto depending upon England and the republic for imports and exports. A predominant French influence in the southern Netherlands would be equally perilous. Under French guidance these provinces, economically weakened during a century, might throw off the yoke of the closed Scheldt and become the victorious competitors of the maritime powers.<sup>1</sup> Spain's extensive territory had been for half a century an inexhaustible mine of large commercial profits for the republic and England. Was this all to be risked by the establishment of the prevailing influence of France in the Spanish world's empire? This must be prevented at any cost.

Political and economic considerations induced those governing the republic after the stadtholder's death to change nothing in the plans of the energetic Orange prince with regard to European matters in general. The alliance of the two maritime powers with the emperor was for the new administration a political and an economical necessity. There was no wavering in the attitude of the republic towards foreign affairs after the death of William III. The spirit of the departed stadtholder continued to inspire the statesmen of the republic, because his foreign policy had been rooted in the similar interests of the two states, over which he had ruled. England also went on in the same course for some years under the tried leadership of the statesmen who had

<sup>1</sup> See Von Noorden, *Europäische Geschichte im 18. Jahrh.*, i., p. 46.



governed it with William, Queen Anne, succeeding him on the English throne, and the States-General followed the way indicated by him. John Churchill, earl of Marlborough, who now became the chief statesman of England with the help of Anne's friendship for his wife, and Antonie Heinsius, who conducted affairs in the republic with great discretion after William's death, acted together. But the republic may be said to have had a new government after the king's death. William III., monarch without the title, had during his absence allowed his trusted friends or creatures to rule over the country. The "republicans" had not ventured to lift up their voice against the abuses of the prince's favourites, not even against Odijk who played the tyrant in Zeeland and enriched himself and his followers shamelessly. In Amsterdam also all opposition was broken. Johan Hudde, the friend of Dijkveld, the prince's trusted servant, managed matters there with Witsen and Valckenier. The aged Dijkveld himself directed them in Utrecht. In Gelderland the burggrave of Nimwegen, Jacob van Randwijck, and other nobles were supreme; so it was in Overijssel; in Friesland and Groningen the king had his friends watching the actions of the princess dowager Amelia, the guardian of her young son, whom William III. seemed to have fixed upon for his successor. Only a few members of the former party of the States had maintained themselves in subordinate positions—a son of John de Witt was the influential secretary of Dordrecht<sup>1</sup> and Hugo de Groot's grandson was bailiff of Bergen op Zoom—but none of them had dared openly to oppose King William. They had lived in anticipation of better times, counting upon the increasing physical debility of the king. This had long been viewed with anxiety by faithful fellow-workers of William III., the

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires de Monsieur de B.*, ed. Krämer, in *Bijdr. en Med. Hist. Gen. te Utrecht*, xix., p. 120.



council pensionary Heinsius and Johan Hop, treasurer-general from 1698. With the able Simon van Slingelandt, secretary of the council of state from 1690, and the indefatigable clerk of the States-General, François Fagel, they were the chief officials of the republic. They had made themselves indispensable, so that amid the changes at the speedily approaching death of King William their continuance appeared assured. In communication with such influential magistrates as the pensionary of Amsterdam, Willem Buys, that of Rotterdam, Isaac van Hoornbeek, that of Gouda, Bruno van der Dussen, and with men of like sentiments in other provinces than Holland as Sicco van Goslinga in Friesland, Van Rechteren in Overijssel, Welland in Utrecht, they formed under the lead of the council pensionary a nucleus of governing personages to rule the republic in the difficulties arising from the death of the king-stadtholder.

At the head of the administration was the council pensionary now fifty-eight years of age, a man of uncommon ability, from years of association with William III. familiar with his ideas, a born diplomat, pliable and benevolent, calm and reserved, simple in manner, of good form and sound understanding, incessantly striving to attain his ends without personal ambition, without putting his own opinion too much in the foreground. As during the king's life he had been an excellent interpreter of his views in the republic, so he was after the king's death the faithful continuer of his work.<sup>1</sup> A new stadtholder was not seriously considered, now that the wish of the dead Orange prince had remained unfulfilled and his Friesland cousin of fourteen studying at Utrecht, John William Friso of Nassau, was still too young to take the high posts suddenly vacated. The chances were even worse for the king of Prussia, who claimed the

<sup>1</sup> See the extensive correspondence preserved in the Heinsius archives, now in the Royal Archives at The Hague.

entire succession of William III. as the son of Frederick Henry's eldest daughter, while the Frisian Nassau was only the grandson of a younger daughter. Dissension between the noble heirs hindered the aspirations of both. As the direction of the great war of the allies seemed safe in the hands of Marlborough, soon raised to acting captain-general of the union, there was no need of a real captain-general of the army of the republic, which, as after William II.'s death, could be commanded by a field-marshal coöperating with the council of state and deputies in the field. It had such a commander in the prince of Nassau-Saarbrück.

The military leader of the allies, Marlborough, had hitherto been more of a courtier and statesman than a general, but nobody appeared so fitted as he, the queen's favourite, to make England and the republic work together. It was not to be denied that the republic possessed apparently superior generals in Godard van Rheede, earl of Athlone, in Nassau-Ouwerkerk, Slangenburg, and others, but Marlborough speedily proved an able commander. Through the influence of Heinsius he was invested with the chief military command also in the republic. He had further the diplomatic talents,<sup>1</sup> distinguishing the elegant courtier, the lively talker, the man of the world, so necessary to bring the three allies with their divergent interests towards the common goal, the war against France. A clever diplomatist, an excellent general, a skilled intriguer, by no means indifferent to fame and wealth, but ambitious and covetous, he was enabled to play a great part in the history of this time. But in the eyes of the Dutch people John William Friso, as the bearer of the beloved name of Nassau, was the heir of the traditions of the extinct Orange house, with which his family had always been so closely connected, and the leading statesmen comprehended that

<sup>1</sup> See the character sketch in Goslinga, *Mémoires*, p. 42.



his claims might become of importance. A few days after William III.'s death, on March 25th, the States-General met at The Hague. Holland, guided by Heinsius, declared it knew no better way "of healing this severe wound" than for the Estates of the provinces to act together with mutual confidence. The other now stadtholderless provinces responded with similar declarations, showing that none of them found any difficulty in governing without a stadtholder. Thus the condition of 1650 was renewed.

It was no more than natural that the regents deposed under William III. should now wish to be restored to honour and office. In Holland this occasioned little trouble. The voting cities, again intrusted with the election of their own government, saw some of the old regents appear. Under the lead of Heinsius and his friends there was no thought of a violent exclusion of the opposing party. Elsewhere the difficulties were greater. In Zealand the long smouldering anger of the people broke out against the prince's representative, Odijk, and his favourites, prominent among them being Philips Hodenpijl, clerk of convoys and licenses. Odijk, the hated "foreigner" in Zealand, was on April 3d removed by the Estates from his office of representative of the first nobleman, and Hodenpijl had to give up his place. The dissension in Gelderland ran higher.<sup>1</sup> Here also the appointment of municipal officers was bestowed upon the magistrates. Men long deprived of influence by the governmental organisation of 1674 appeared unwilling thus to be permanently excluded. They stirred up the people and guilds at Nimwegen to demand the restoration of the tribunes established after Maurice's

<sup>1</sup> See Wagenaar, vol. xvii., pp. 135, 231, where these affairs are explained at length from the resolutions of the Estates of Gelderland and many printed memorials and deductions of the time.



conquest of the city. Reduced from thirty-two to six, only two of the six surviving tribunes dared to side with the guilds. They had to contend with the opposition of the rest in striving to recover the power of their body and to fill up their number. This was effected in June, and the new tribunes immediately turned out the entire council and appointed a new one. Thus a "new order" was substituted for the "old order." Nimwegen's old regents, led by burgomaster Roukens, were not so easily to be suppressed. They asked to be maintained by the Estates of the province, which was accomplished with the aid of the increased garrison. In January, 1703, the people of Nimwegen forced the old government to evacuate the city hall again and to give way to the new government. At Arnhem and elsewhere the tribunes acted energetically and changed the governments of the cities.

The defeated party resolved to appeal to the States-General for the support of their rights according to the arrangement of 1674. But the New Order went back to ancient privileges of the time of the counts and denied that the States-General had any authority to interfere in the "domestic" affairs of the province. The disputes soon exercised an unfavourable influence upon the finances; taxes could not be collected regularly; the province's quotas were not paid, which could not be endured by the other provinces during the costly war of succession. Holland, threatened in its own financial interests by the absence of Gelderland's contributions to the general treasury, proposed to the States-General to restore "the government for the best service of the province" and to make both parties come to an agreement willingly or unwillingly. The proposition was adopted, though it was decided to send no soldiers. Holland, favouring generally the New Order, from which no attempt to revive the rule of the stadtholder needed to be

feared, secured the reception of a deputation in Gelderland. Four eminent magistrates of Holland appeared at Arnhem and, on December 13, 1704, effected an "accord" between the parties of the Veluwe, by which the relation between nobles and cities was made as it had been from 1651 to 1672, while the newly appointed governments remained everywhere in authority. These new governments were disturbed by the attitude of the opposing party, which appeared more and more inclined to set up a stadtholder and secretly agitated among the people. At Arnhem a corps of volunteers was raised to support the new government after the example of Nimwegen. In a general convention at Zutphen a league was proposed between the cities of Gelderland to put down all opposition to the New Order, not to appoint a stadtholder or captain-general except unanimously, and never to bestow both these dignities upon the same person. The hostile party opposed the formation of this league and tried by force to get possession of the government in the chief cities. This failed in Arnhem, Nimwegen, and elsewhere. At Nimwegen in August, 1705, the citizens took up arms to protect the government, drove the armed followers of the Old Order from the city hall occupied by them, and banished some of the old regents. The turbulent Roukens was beheaded in the market-place, and several of the participants in the affair were hanged. In the course of the year the Nimwegen and Zutphen quarters were thus gradually pacified. In the quarter of the Veluwe there were still some violent scenes in 1706 and 1707 between the nobles and towns. Finally the Estates of the province thought best to interfere vigorously. The local volunteers were everywhere declared discharged; Nimwegen and Arnhem had to receive a strong garrison; some regents of the Old Order were deposed. The regulation made in 1706, that in all the cities of Gelderland the government should last only



three years, continued in force until 1717. Finally it was determined that the regents should again be chosen for life and, as formerly, by the magistrates themselves from double the number nominated by citizens and guilds or tribunes. A general amnesty put an end to the long commotion. Thus in Zealand and Gelderland the agitation, which had here and there assumed a democratic character and was directed against the regent oligarchy ruling under William III., resulted in a new settlement in favour of other persons and families and of an aristocratic form of government, though in Gelderland at least the rights of the tribunes and guilds were recognised in name. The appointment of the regents for life created a new oligarchy in Gelderland, which soon united closely in the old way and brought the corporations of guilds and tribunes wholly in its power. It was not otherwise in Utrecht and Overijssel.

Amid this trouble of years in some provinces many an eye was turned to the young heir of the traditions of the house of Orange. He was sixteen years old in August, 1703, had finished his studies at Utrecht, and now took part in the campaign with his cousin Nassau-Ouwerkerk. As "designated" stadtholder and captain-general of Friesland and City and Land he could not be content with a low rank. When the acting captain-general of the union, Marlborough, desired the appointment of several high officers after the marshal's death in 1702, the two northern provinces urged the elevation of their young stadtholder to be general of infantry. Deputies from the States-General, led by Buys, appeared early in 1704 at Leeuwarden to negotiate with the Frisian Estates and the widowed princess. They effected a compromise, by which Friesland agreed to Holland's proposition to appoint Henry of Nassau, lord of Ouwerkerk,<sup>1</sup> as field-marshal, Slangenburg, Noyelles,

<sup>1</sup> He was the grandson of Prince Maurice as the third son of



and the young prince of Nassau as generals of infantry, the count of Tilly as general of cavalry. The young prince was not to take office and pay before his twentieth year and to have only a seat but no vote in the council of war. Heinsius, who wanted to see the prince a general, managed matters adroitly to accomplish the wishes of William III. and to secure to his cousin the place which the great Orange prince had destined for him. Zealand refused to recognise the prince as general. The young prince continued to participate in the war, waiting for the future. The history of young William III. was repeated in other forms. Towards his eighteenth birthday the question came up of his right to a place in the council of state.<sup>1</sup> Holland and Utrecht, remembering how William III. had gradually risen to the highest dignities, did not favour admitting him to the council. Friesland's appeal to the old custom and the former instructions of the council could not convince the two opposing provinces and Zealand, which naturally joined them. The affair dragged on until 1707, when the prince became twenty years old. Overijssel, Gelderland, and even City and Land were now persuaded to side with the three other provinces. So he was not yet admitted to the council of state, though he was allowed to appear in the army as acting general. His chances for the stadtholdership outside of the two northern provinces were evidently bad. But the prince did not lose courage. He continued in close relations with Heinsius and in the tone of the letters exchanged between them prevail mutual confidence and good will, on the prince's side gratitude for service already done, on that of Heinsius

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Louis of Nassau, lord of Beverweert, younger brother of Odijk and had distinguished himself in William III.'s wars, a good general but not of an extraordinary intellect, rather small-minded and jealous in disposition (see Goslinga, *Mémoires*, p. 11).

<sup>1</sup> Wagenaar, xvii., p. 272.

readiness for further service. Friso married in 1709 Maria Louisa of Hesse-Cassel, an able and energetic woman, who soon won the favour of the people of Friesland and Groningen. He applied himself mainly to the military art and so distinguished himself in the field that he was looked upon as the proper commander of the Dutch army for the future. Once he attained that position, he would not stop there, but the high dignities of old in the republic would fall into his hands. All expectations concerning his future were annihilated by the untimely death of the young prince, as he was crossing the Moerdijk on July 14, 1711, when, at the request of the States-General, he was going from the army to The Hague to meet there the king of Prussia for the purpose of settling the differences still pending with regard to the inheritance of William III. Just then there seemed some hope of his elevation to be stadtholder in the other provinces, as the king of Prussia, whose help against France was needed by the allies, appeared ready to give that help for concessions by the prince in the inheritance matter, and he was expected to urge upon the States the elevation of his blood relative. The part, which England had played in William III.'s young days, was apparently now to be undertaken by Prussia. Under these circumstances an uncommonly hard blow for the weakly represented house of Nassau was the sudden death of the prince, who left a little daughter, his son William Charles Henry Friso not being born until after his demise, on September 1st. The desired agreement with Prussia remained in suspense, and it would be years before the newly-born prince could aspire to any higher dignity than the hereditary stadtholdership of the two northern provinces. But the presentation of large sums of money to the young prince by Holland and the States-General proved that he could not be regarded merely as an "eminent nobleman who



happened to be living in the republic," as the party of the States under De Witt had wished to consider the young William III.

Amidst all these internal troubles and others of an ecclesiastical nature the great war of the Spanish Succession went on for years. In May, 1702, the States, England, and the emperor sent their declarations of war to France and Spain. The States asserted that France had not complied with the provisions of the peace of Ryswick concerning the commerce of the Dutch, but had obstructed it by oppressive tariffs, and furthermore had played a double game in the affair of the Spanish succession, while Spain's new king had joined with his grandfather and received French troops in the Spanish Netherlands, expelling the Dutch garrisons which had been placed in the chief fortresses with the consent of Charles II.<sup>1</sup> The French troops, stationed in the Spanish Netherlands under the marshal Boufflers, attempted soon after the outbreak of war to surprise Nimwegen, but this was prevented by the timely arrival of a force of the allies from Cleves under Godard van Rheede, earl of Athlone. Soon appeared there the earl of Marlborough himself to undertake the management of the campaign, as commander of the Dutch and English armies, in conjunction with the five Dutch deputies in the field, which gentlemen under William III. had been little more than intendants of the army, but since the instruction of August 21, 1702, had more authority and sat in the army council of war with a decisive veto. These deputies in the field were a constant trial to the English general. Usually not soldiers but men of the council hall, they thought themselves called upon to set bounds to military ambition. They believed a vigi-

<sup>1</sup> Lamberty, ii., p. 107; Gachard, *Histoire de la Belgique au commencement du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (La Haye, Bruxelles, 1880), p. 25.

lant watch necessary against the military spirit of the foreigner now in command of the Dutch armies. By their influence in the promotion of the Dutch officers they were in favour with the latter and became the authority, to which officers of all ranks addressed their complaints. The difficulties of this situation came to light plainly in the first campaign. But Marlborough proved himself a general. He expelled the enemy from Spanish Gelderland and captured one Meuse fortress after another: Venloo, Stevensweerd, Roermond, finally Liege, the Dutch generals Coehoorn and Obdam distinguishing themselves also in these affairs. While returning along the Meuse in a small yacht Marlborough with his staff fell into the hands of a French patrol, but was unrecognised and released on displaying some passports. In this first campaign he had shown himself a bold and able general and a clever mediator as well. Of this latter there was need not only in the camp but also in the council chambers of London and The Hague.

The States, as formerly, did not wish to molest trade with the enemy's territory. The matter was differently considered, and prohibition of all trade with the enemy was demanded in England, which had not the same commercial interests and was willing to give a check to its Dutch competitors in order, after the peace, to obtain possession of the French and Spanish trade. The land provinces saw no great objection, but the three sea provinces opposed and only yielded towards the summer of 1703 on condition that the prohibitory edicts were to be valid but for one year. After that year the edicts were not renewed, as people in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Dordrecht discovered that trade was running off to the "neutrals," to Denmark, Sweden, and especially to Bremen and Hamburg. With French passports a brisk trade was carried on with French and Spanish ports. Trade connived at with the enemy brought new



difficulties with England, regarding the activity of English privateers. Many Dutch merchantmen were taken to England on account of trading with the enemy. Protests followed from the Dutch merchants, and the English government, desirous of harmony between the allies and not unwilling to yield, found itself in an awkward position against Parliament insisting sharply upon the prohibition of commerce. Not until the closing of the session of Parliament in April, 1705, did the government venture to release the Dutch ships and to allow commerce in the Dutch manner, by means of licenses, contraband alone being excluded. As it was not stipulated what goods were contraband, complaints continued on both sides. They became no less serious, when English commerce with Spain began to develop after the victories of the allies on land and sea, which brought a part of that kingdom into the power of the king, Charles III., for whom they were reputed to be fighting, and the English naval power in those waters was increased far above the Dutch.<sup>1</sup> The old jealousy found new food, and the coöperation of the two allies could only be kept up by the good will of both governments and by the action of Marlborough and Heinsius. The former understood that without the latter's help he could not maintain his own wavering political power in England. Heinsius knew that the alliance with England would be endangered by Marlborough's fall, which would put into office a Tory ministry favouring France and the Stuart pretender, the so-called James III. As early as 1702 there was a Tory majority in the English Parliament, and only the personal influence of Marlborough and his wife with the queen prevented the appearance of the dreaded Tory government. How long would he be able to resist

<sup>1</sup> In 1709 the Dutch statesman Goslinga (*Mémoires*, p. 101) recognises fully *la supériorité de leurs forces maritimes sur nous*.

the unavoidable court intrigues? This question was asked with anxiety by the Dutch statesmen.

The war went on meanwhile on land and sea. In Bavaria, whose elector, Maximilian Emanuel, long sided with France, along the middle course of the Rhine, in northern Italy the imperial generals, Prince Eugene of Savoy at their head, fought against the French and their allies. The coasts of Spain, Portugal, and Italy shook with the roar of the cannon of the English and Dutch fleets, which repeatedly landed troops. The French coasts were menaced in conjunction with revolts of the last French Huguenots, the Camisards fighting desperately in the Cevennes. At the same time the torch of war was lighted in northern Europe. Here Sweden contended, under the adventurous young Charles XII., with its old enemies, Poland and Russia, the latter guided by the great czar Peter. More than during the Thirty Years' War Europe was in fire and flame at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The republic was deeply interested, and the Dutch merchants eagerly read the reports of war coming in from all sides and bringing them profit and loss. A steady stream of pamphlets flowed from the Dutch presses, the diffusers of the news of the world in Europe and the willing servants of Dutch commerce.

The great naval warfare ended in the first years, as France and Spain together were no match for the two allied, maritime powers. There was no thought of battles on the open sea, but only of attack and defence of the Spanish coast. A Dutch fleet of over forty vessels, under the lieutenant-admiral, Philips van Almonde, and his colleague, Gerard Callenburgh, with three thousand soldiers under General Sparre, joined an English fleet of equal strength commanded by Sir George Rooke, the duke of Ormonde having command of all the troops for landing. Rooke was to command on the sea, Ormonde on the land in the proposed attack on Cadiz. It was to



be as a hundred years earlier under the young Essex. Cadiz was too strong, and the "unfortunate" expedition ended only in the burning and destruction of munitions of war and mercantile goods near the city.<sup>1</sup> But a brilliant victory was won by a part of the united fleets on the voyage home, October 23, 1702, in Vigo Bay over the Franco-Spanish fleet lying there, the West Indian "silver fleet" falling partly into the hands of the allies or being destroyed or concealed. The powerful hand of William III. was soon missed, and the admiralities did not work well together. Coöperation with the British fleets left much to be desired. So there were not many naval engagements of importance, and the chief effort was to protect the North Sea from the French privateers of Dunkirk, Ostend, and smaller Flemish ports. Zeeland, threatened close at hand, exerted itself specially. Privateering took a fresh start in this province, after premiums were put upon it in 1702 by the States-General. Middelburg and Flushing alone equipped fifty in the same year, later increased to seventy-five with seventeen hundred cannon and nearly twelve thousand men. All the seas and bays of western and southern Europe were full of Dutch "commissioned ships," which chased after the enemy's merchantmen and privateers everywhere and left not even the war-ships unmolested. Hundreds of prizes were captured, frequently without respecting neutral and friendly powers. The disappearance of the enemy's merchant vessels from all seas caused privateering to diminish about 1708, after it had produced great gains, particularly in poverty-stricken Zeeland. To threaten the Spanish coast expeditions were undertaken in conjunction with English fleets. A small independent squadron under Captain Roemer Vlaccq saved a hundred Dutch and English merchantmen from a superior force off the Portuguese coast near Setubal on May 21, 1703,

<sup>1</sup> De Jonge, iii., p. 578.

though it was with the sacrifice of his life and his warships which had to strike their flags. In the following year a Dutch-English fleet under Rooke and Callenburgh succeeded in capturing Gibraltar, strong but badly defended by the "miserable" Spaniards (August 3, 1704). The conquest was nominally for the Hapsburg king, Charles III. of Spain, who was conveyed to his country by a Dutch-English fleet, but an exclusively English garrison was left in it, and since that time the town commanding the entrance of the Mediterranean Sea has remained English. A hostile armada under the count of Toulouse soon came from Barcelona to recapture the place. It numbered fifty large and thirty-eight small vessels, fire ships, and galleys, the only force that France could now put forth. The fleet of the allies was about as numerous, but less strongly armed and manned. The enemy was encountered off Malaga on August 25, 1704. The twelve Dutch ships greatly distinguished themselves in the ensuing battle, which resulted in the retreat of the badly damaged French fleet. At the conquest of Barcelona in 1705 the Dutch auxiliary fleet under Almonde rendered important service, as later before Cartagena and Alicante. Almonde, a pupil of De Ruyter and Cornelis Tromp, was the republic's chief admiral; in 1708 he obtained the dignity of lieutenant-admiral of Holland and West Friesland, then the highest post in the navy, and retained it until his death in 1711.

There were no great French or Spanish fleets to fight against, and the naval war became a guerrilla. Almonde and the other lieutenant-admirals, Callenburgh and Geleyn Evertsen, were not sent to sea to avoid disputes with the English admirals concerning rank. The importance of the Dutch navy declined greatly under these circumstances. The largest and best ships remained at home with the highest admirals, and only small detachments under captains, rear-admirals, or vice-admirals



upheld the honour of the republic in the insignificant engagements after the battle of Malaga. In general the republic confined itself to making the North Sea safe with convoys and squadrons, a task that gradually became difficult enough for the more and more neglected navy. Financial exhaustion resulting from the long war rendered the admiralties after 1710 unable to keep their engagements. The best ships were rotting in the docks, few new ones were built, the sailors were dispersed, and in a few years little more was left of William III.'s great fleet than old wood and rusty cannon. In the last years of the war the danger from Dunkirk and the Flemish ports diminished and with it the incentive to exertion on the sea. After 1710 no Dutch squadron sailed out, and the English government began to complain of the ever weaker coöperation of the republic. One thing and another caused the fame of the republic as a great maritime power to decline considerably. No more Tromps and De Ruyters could spring up, although their pupils were still at the head of the fleet.

The war on land may be called more important than the naval operations. The first successful campaign of Marlborough, now made a duke, was followed by a second less fortunate one. The Anglo-Dutch army was reënforced by twenty thousand men, mostly German troops obtained by treaties of subsidy with small German princes; but after the capture of Bonn little more was accomplished, owing mainly to disputes between the energetic duke and the Dutch deputies in the field jealous of their authority. General Obdam's proposed attack on Antwerp and the Waes district was thwarted by Boufflers, who surrounded him at Eeckeren and drove him back upon Breda after a sharp fight. Hoei and Limburg were taken by Marlborough, and Villeroy, the commander of the French troops in the southern Netherlands, saw himself compelled to look after the safety

of the chief cities of Brabant and Flanders. The refusal of the field deputies to consent to an attack upon the French army, the independent and often personally hostile attitude of Slangenburg and other Dutch generals towards the chief commander, the apparent purpose of the States to let their army fight as little as possible and to garrison with their troops the places captured in the south, while they declined to have the oath taken there to King Charles III.—this all displeased Marlborough, and the campaign ended with mutual reproaches, so that the general refused roundly to manage matters again in this way. Vehement pamphlets and confidential letters and memorials to the States-General, which in the existing system of government could not remain secret, imbittered the feeling on both sides, and the British general was plainly unwilling to allow himself to be bound by the field deputies mostly not military men. The appointment of Ouwerkerk as field-marshal restored a good understanding somewhat, but the institution of the deputies in the field remained a danger. It was now stipulated that for the following year Ouwerkerk with a part of the army was to guard the territory conquered in the Netherlands. The main army under Marlborough moved from Maestricht by rapid marches to southern Germany, where he soon appeared on the Danube and with the aid of the imperials under Prince Eugene defeated the French marshal Tallard on August 13, 1704, at Höchstädt and Blenheim. The Franco-Bavarian army was destroyed: all Bavaria fell into the hands of the allies; the elector had to leave his country and sought refuge at the French court, which placed him in his former post in the southern Netherlands, now as governor for the king, Philip V. In this summer the Dutch general Sparre<sup>1</sup> had bombarded Bruges and Namur and laid the country far and near under contribution, but

<sup>1</sup> He was a Swede by birth, an experienced and brave soldier,



little more had occurred than disputes between the Dutch generals, who blamed one another for doing nothing. Despite Marlborough's urgency, next year also brought nothing but marching to and fro and small victories over the enemy in Brabant; the energetic commander again had serious difficulties with the cautious deputies in the field and complained to the States of them and of some Dutch generals who had disapproved of his plans of attack as impracticable and rash. It was expected that a new instruction for the field deputies, with strict rules for discipline, would produce a better relation for 1706. This instruction,<sup>1</sup> however, was not adapted to ending dissensions between Marlborough and the deputies. New field deputies were appointed by the various provinces, among them being the Frisian nobleman Sicco van Goslinga,<sup>2</sup> but these gentlemen were almost without exception not professional soldiers, and with them too the touchy Marlborough often had violent disputes.

Before this year's campaign began, the aged king of France, now little desirous of war, had endeavoured to use public opinion in the republic for his advantage in order to persuade it to a separate peace. It was evident that in the way hitherto followed the war could not be continued much longer on the side of the republic. Gelderland and the two northern provinces contributed almost nothing more; Utrecht and Overijssel were usually much in arrears; Holland and Zealand bore nearly the whole burden of the war. In Holland commerce with the enemy's ports had revived only slowly. Amsterdam especially felt the weight of the great war, and its able pensionary, the influential Buys, called attention to it

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one of the best Dutch commanders (Goslinga, *Mémoires*, p. 12).

<sup>1</sup> *Groot Placcaatboek*, v., p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Slothouwer, *De staatsman Sicco van Goslinga*, p. 9.

constantly. This feeling was kept in view by the French government, always hoping to sunder the two allies so divergent in interests. In the autumn of 1705 it authorised the marquis d'Alègre, a prisoner of war, to make offers of peace, which found open ears in Amsterdam and the land provinces. A deputation in the name of six provinces went to the council pensionary to advocate peace. The death of the old emperor, Leopold I., in this year influenced the peaceful disposition, as the new emperor, Joseph I., had no children and his brother, the proposed king of Spain, had now become the nearest heir to the Hapsburg crown. The revival of Charles V.'s empire—Spain, Italy, Germany under one head—was then a possibility. D'Alègre negotiated secretly with the government leaders of the States and was aided by the young Helvetius of The Hague now residing in Paris. The French president of the chamber of accounts, Rouillé, visited Holland secretly in November and talked with Heinsius, Buys, and others about an agreement, the substance of which was laid before England privately by Buys in the spring during an embassy there ostensibly to arrange for the new campaign. It soon appeared that peace with the recognition of Philip V. as king of Spain—France's condition—would not be accepted by the English, while the demand of the States for a number of fortresses in the south as a barrier against France had slight chance of being acceded to by Louis XIV. The emperor naturally wished to see the war continued for his brother's sake and was averse to an accommodation.

The campaign of 1706, planned by Marlborough, who appeared in person at Vienna, was designed as a great attack upon the eastern frontier of France by the entire force of the allies. France itself being invaded, peace was to be prescribed to the proud Louis. But the Dutch leaders and generals would not consent to the grand



plan and urged vigorous action in the Spanish Netherlands near their border forts. Not until May was an agreement reached on this last, and Marlborough with a heavy heart placed himself at the head of the allied army, which was to attack the enemy stationed at Louvain under Villeroy and the elector Maximilian Emanuel. With English, Dutch, and German contingents he had sixty thousand men and defeated the equally strong enemy on Whitsunday, May 23d, at Ramillies after a severe battle, in which the French army was driven like a flock of sheep. Louvain, Brussels, Ghent, all of Brabant and half of Flanders were the prize of the victory of the "Iron Duke," whose fame as a general was now established. There was no longer a French army in the Netherlands. In the course of the summer nearly all the rest of Flanders and the Hainaut fortress of Ath fell into the conqueror's hands. Brabant and Flanders swore allegiance to Charles III. as sovereign. In Spain the French were expelled from Madrid, and in Italy Prince Eugene after the great battle of Turin chased them from Piedmont and Milan.

These defeats turned Louis again to negotiation, but the king of Sweden, having just conquered Saxony, seemed not inclined to mediate, and the secret peace proposals of the elector of Bavaria at The Hague had as little success. The French government's offers, brought to the knowledge of the allies by a burgomaster of Rotterdam, Hennequin, gave rise to serious negotiation. France was now ready to be content for Philip V. with the Spanish lands in Italy. But England declined to accept this proposition, in part because the States would become sole master of the southern Netherlands. By advice of Mesnager, experienced in commerce, the French government sought to entice the merchants of Amsterdam into a peace negotiation by an advantageous commercial treaty with Spain, to which might be joined a

similar treaty with France. But France would have to make too great sacrifices and offer also political advantages to persuade the Dutch, as at Nimwegen, suddenly to withdraw from the war and thus to bring about a general peace. Mesnager did not get beyond discussions. The existence of secret relations between France and some Dutch regents interested in commerce afforded the best chance of peace, and the States had to be satisfied with the military success obtained, in consequence of which the conquered provinces were already treated as Dutch territory. The following year of the war was characterised by little of note. Marlborough, who had dissuaded the ambitious Swedish monarch from going farther into Germany, was impeded in his operations by heavy rains, and could not push the enemy back to the vexation of many in the army, who suspected him of selfish and treacherous plans. The enemy for the time did not press on his peace negotiations. The great defeat inflicted at Oudenarde upon the French army, July 11, 1708, by the forces of the allies under Marlborough and Prince Eugene, brought Louis to other thoughts. The French generals, the inefficient duke of Vendôme and the king's inexperienced son, the duke of Burgundy, were beaten with a loss of no less than seven thousand prisoners. Then again Marlborough had proposed to penetrate far into France; but the Dutch deputies, this time supported by Prince Eugene, were too cautious to follow the bold commander in his plans. It was resolved to besiege Lille, which after an unexpectedly long and arduous siege fell into the hands of the allies, as did the Flemish cities of Ghent and Bruges captured by surprise early in the campaign by the enemy. Dutch troops under the brave field-marshal Ouwerkerk took an important part in this campaign; well they merited the honour of the brilliant review, in which Ouwerkerk, weak and dying, received the congratulations of the army after



the battle of Oudenarde amid the conquered colours and standards. Ouwerkerk's death soon afterwards was a great loss to the States; Count Tilly succeeded him as field-marshal. Only Hainaut and Namur in the Spanish Netherlands were now in French hands, and both the question of the Dutch barrier in the south and that of peace again came to the fore.

Two ideas lay at the base of the demand for a barrier against France. The grand alliance treaty of the powers of 1701 had only spoken generally of Belgium as a desired *digue, rempart et barrière* for the republic, which by it, in an eventual peace, would obtain security against France's design of centuries to extend to the north, and this was really William III.'s idea. After his death a second idea of an economic nature was added by the statesmen guiding the republic. Belgium, after the hoped for conquest by the maritime powers and the emperor, as compensation for the heavy war expenses, must be permanently subjected to the economic domination of the northern republic, which feared the competition of the south. With an eye to the first purpose the occupation of the chief fortresses by Dutch troops was secured by William III. in the last war with the consent of the Spanish government and maintained after the peace of Ryswick. The second plan made necessary actual supremacy of the States over Belgium, though an appearance of authority might be allowed to the Hapsburg heir of the Spanish monarchy. The closing of the Scheldt was no longer regarded as sufficient. Complete subjection of the southern provinces to the republic's economic interests was required as the price of the uncommonly great sacrifices made in the war. The result was the immediate introduction of regular Dutch government in conquered places, growing opposition of the imperial government, and hesitation on the part of the English. But the States let no opportunity pass to attain

their object. Marlborough was mindful enough of England's interests to urge a joint occupation of the conquered lands on behalf of Charles III. of Spain, but the maritime powers were to rule only temporarily. It was thought that he desired for himself the governorship in these provinces. With him the treasurer-general Hop and the Leyden burgomaster and field-deputy Johan van den Bergh, acting with a council of state consisting of Belgians, were intrusted with the government of the conquered provinces, while the provisional governor appointed by the emperor, Count Goes, imperial ambassador at The Hague, was not even allowed in the south. An attempt of the imperial government to name Marlborough as provisional governor with Count Goes as his adviser failed owing to the commander's refusal to permit his appointment against the wish of the States-General. The English government hoped by some concession in these matters to obtain from the covetous republic a guarantee for the Protestant succession in England, but Heinsius and his friends seemed to have exaggerated notions concerning the "barrier" and to want really the entire southern Netherlands, though it might be under the nominal supremacy of Charles III. Marlborough complained of these great demands, but had to yield much for the sake of coöperation between the maritime powers; for some months the Dutch plenipotentiaries, thrusting aside the council of state, ruled without restraint in the cities of Brabant and Flanders. Their arbitrary conduct, their suppression of ancient liberties, their arrogance, the extortions of Marlborough and his generals and of the Protestant officials from the republic stirred up so much bad blood in the south that an English commissioner was appointed in September, 1706, to act with the Dutch deputies in order to prevent a general uprising of the population. George Stepney, former ambassador at Vienna, was chosen, a



sharp and vigorous representative of English interests, a trusted guardian over those of the Hapsburgs.<sup>1</sup>

In the peace discussions of 1707 the subject came up of a "barrier treaty" between the two maritime powers, by which the States-General should be restrained from a separate peace with France, but it was evident that England would only conclude such a treaty under conditions securing Hapsburg supremacy and English interests. Negotiations between The Hague and London continued nearly two years. The speedy death of Steyn, succeeded by the energetic Lord Cadogan, Marlborough's adjutant and friend, brought slight change in the mutual relation. The Belgian people grew ever more discontented over the oppressive guardianship of the maritime powers and the postponement of the restoration of Hapsburg rule. The imperial government excited the discontent cleverly, and the hitherto insignificant Belgian council of state became a centre of violent opposition, while the French government omitted no promises and regulations concerning commerce by the mouth of its ally, the elector Maximilian Emanuel, and his confidential minister, count of Bergeyck <sup>2</sup> of the southern Netherlands, to win over the people of Brabant and Flanders. Conspiracies, protests, disturbances showed that the Belgian provinces would not willingly submit to the maritime powers, which wanted to treat them without paying much attention to their wishes. The barrier treaty played a great part in the peace negotiation resumed by the disheartened French government after the battle of Oudenarde and the fall of Lille. It began by secret correspondence between French agents and Dutch regents, between the zealous count of Berg-

<sup>1</sup> See regarding the situation in Belgium, *Mémoires du comte de Mérode-Westerloo*, ii., p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Huisman, *La Belgique commerciale sous l'empereur Charles VI.* (Brux., 1902), p. 38.

eyck and Van der Dussen, burgomaster of Gouda. The French minister de Torcy, who had despatched Mesnager in January, sent Rouillé secretly in March, 1709, and Buys and Van der Dussen listened to the French proposals without agreeing to them. Later discussions led to no result, and the secret commenced to leak out, as was natural with the republic's form of government, so that de Torcy himself finally appeared at The Hague to continue the negotiation officially with the representatives of the allies. His presence produced a profound impression.

England and Austria feared that the republic would be persuaded by the offer of commercial advantages in Spain and Belgium. England was induced by this fear to consider further the barrier treaty desired by the republic, provided the latter would guarantee the succession to the English throne. With this prospect the Dutch government, now again in coöperation with its allies, showed little indulgence towards France and made hard demands on Louis: the restoration of nearly all the conquests effected in Germany since 1648, a strong barrier for the States in the southern Netherlands, the demolition of Dunkirk, improvement of the Savoy frontier, an advantageous commercial treaty, finally, in article 37, Louis's help in dethroning his own grandson. This was asking too much, or rather the severity of these demands showed that the States would not so easily leave their allies in the lurch as France had expected. But France was on the verge of the abyss. The conditions mentioned, now communicated to the allies, were approved by Heinsius in the name of the republic, by Prince Eugene and Count Zinzendorf for the emperor, by Marlborough and Lord Townshend for England, and de Torcy, objecting only to article 37, declared himself ready to go to Paris to confer with his government, while the Estates of the Dutch provinces



one after another approved of the proposed treaty. So de Torcy left The Hague. But the French government, though inclined in its hopeless circumstances to accept the other conditions, refused to subscribe to the humiliating article 37 and would only engage not to support Philip V. of Spain, provided he was indemnified in Italy. The allies were not content with such a promise, and the negotiation was broken off early in June, with the reservation of means to resume it by the intervention of the Holstein agent at The Hague, Von Petkum, and the Polish resident Mollo. The disappointment was great in the republic, and many like Goslinga disapproved of the insistence upon the hard article 37.

The war, in June renewed in the Netherlands, soon became so unfavourable to France, that it was compelled to call in the planned mediation. Marlborough and Prince Eugene with a large army moved immediately upon the last French army, which Louis had stationed under the marshal Villars in a strong position on the French frontier, but which was only two-thirds as large as the force of the allies, who had brought this time 120,000 men into the field. The intrenched camp of Villars in northern Artois appeared so strong that both generals hesitated to assail it and laid siege to Tournay, which city surrendered after a month. Villars now moved from Artois into Hainaut by express command of his sovereign, though feeling deeply the responsibility resting upon him. In this army lay France's only hope: the country was exhausted; disturbances arose in the chief cities; communications were cut off by the enemy on all sides; the finances were in confusion; there was no more money in the public treasuries; taxes were put up as high as possible; an appeal was made to the upper classes to deliver up their silverware for the service of the state; debasement of the coinage to secure funds for pressing needs occasioned

universal trouble; famine and misery prevailed everywhere. It was plain that a severe defeat would put France at the feet of the allies and would make the proud Sun King sue for peace. The crisis had evidently arrived. The allied commanders early in September turned their attention to Mons and surrounded it. In the vicinity the French general posted himself in strong intrenchments, appreciating the importance of the conquest of Mons and of Hainaut by the allies, and ready to hazard all to save city and province for his king. At the little village of Malplaquet in the centre of this position on September 11th the bloodiest battle of the entire war took place. Villars and Boufflers, the best French generals of the time, withstood the first attack of a superior force with indomitable energy and unexampled bravery. But equally energetic and brave the swarms of the allies rushed upon the hostile intrenchments. The young prince of Orange-Nassau, at the head of the disciplined Dutch infantry with colours in hand, threw himself heroically on the intrenched Aulnoit, the key of the position, but finally fell back in disorder with the loss of more than two thousand killed. The decimated Dutch force wavered, and Marlborough himself had to come and lead it to avert defeat. The heavy cavalry of Boufflers now stormed against the enemy's broad lines, which threatened to envelop the French positions in a deadly embrace, but the valour of Orange and his weary troops, the persistence of the English, the advance of Prince Eugene on the right flank rescued again the allies. Then the French generals at three o'clock in the afternoon broke off the battle, which was still far from lost, fearing to sacrifice their king's last army, and retreated in good order. About eleven thousand French dead and wounded lay on the field over against nearly twenty-three thousand men of the allies, the Dutch divisions having suffered severely in the desperate attack



on the intrenchments. Malplaquet saw half of the excellent Dutch infantry disappear. The young prince of Orange, nevertheless, with his remaining veterans and a number of English battalions conducted the siege of Mons, which fell into his hands at the end of October. This ended the campaign, the most arduous of the whole war.

France's sad condition made the resumption of peace negotiations more than necessary, but first the maritime powers endeavoured to come to an agreement concerning the fate of Belgium. The English ambassador at The Hague, Lord Townshend, a friend of Marlborough, who with the help of his wife's influence over the queen had again brought the Whigs into power, was with the English commander and the leading statesmen of the republic to prepare harmony between the two allied but jealous States. In the negotiations of the spring France had virtually consented to a Netherlandish barrier on its frontier. Now that the Whigs ruled in England, the chance was good of obtaining there also an approval of the barrier. Negotiations between the two sea powers occupied the entire summer. The wish of the imperial government to see the rights of the Hapsburg dynasty limited as little as possible; its vain efforts to have Marlborough or better Prince Eugene assume the governorship in the southern Netherlands in order to check the aspirations of the Hollanders; England's desire not to extend the Dutch barrier over Ostend and other Flemish ports and to stipulate for itself the dismantling of Dunkirk and the guarantee of the Protestant succession—all this played a part and made the negotiation at The Hague go slowly. Meanwhile England was secretly busy in Spain in obtaining from Charles III. not only a treaty for commerce with Spain and its colonies, but also, in addition to the possession of Gibraltar, that of Port Mahon on Minorca as a naval station, thus out-

doing its Dutch ally. The Dutch statesmen learned of these negotiations through the imperial government, which dreaded the subjection of the Hapsburg authority to the maritime powers and therefore sought to sow distrust between its two allies. Heinsius complained earnestly to Townshend of the English double dealing. To avoid the necessity of a dissolution of the alliance loudly proclaimed by Heinsius and the consequent separate peace of the republic with France the English government finally agreed to the desired barrier treaty, which was signed at The Hague on October 29th, but only by Townshend and not by Marlborough.

The treaty gave the republic the right of garrisoning the fort De Paarl near Antwerp, the castle of Ghent, and Damme in order to dominate the old commercial cities of Ghent and Bruges; the forts of St. Donaas and Knokke with Sluis were to guard the Bruges canal; Dutch garrisons in Nieuwpoort and St. Philips were to hold Ostend in subjection; those in Dendermonde, Lier, and Halle would serve to protect Brabant, those in Namur and Charleroi to defend the Meuse and Sambre districts. Furthermore, at the least danger of war the republic might place troops in all the cities and forts of the south deemed desirable. The ruler over the south was to pay annually a million livres for the ordinary garrisons, secured by mortgage. The frontier fortresses conquered or to be conquered from France: Lille, Condé, Tournay, Valenciennes, Furnes, Ypres, Maubeuge were designated as the republic's property to hold France in check by an iron girdle. The Scheldt was to remain closed, while the republic could establish commercial tariffs on the rivers and canals of Belgium at its will. By the execution of this treaty the republic would have acquired the military, financial, and economic guardianship over the south. Again the republic allied itself solemnly with England and promised to conclude no



peace until Louis XIV. had recognised first Queen Anne and then the Protestant house of Hanover as entitled to the succession in England with the exclusion of the Stuarts. After some hesitation on the English side, the ratification of the treaty followed in December. It was called secret, but it could not long be concealed from the emperor and his brother in Spain. Great was the indignation at Vienna, and Prince Eugene declared that the Hapsburg heir might as well give up the southern Netherlands entirely; but the maritime powers were little disturbed by this feeling on the part of their ally so dependent upon them.

The barrier treaty was all the republic could wish; it only remained to have it included in the definitive treaty of peace of the allies with France. The republic was inclined to negotiation with France, whenever the latter had no objection to the treaty just concluded. The last campaign had not entirely annihilated France, but this country needed peace, if it did not want to be ruined by internal difficulties and external dangers. The usual methods of the French government to come in touch with the Dutch regents, who had long been weary of the war, were now followed again. Von Petkum at The Hague was authorised in October to declare that Louis was ready for peace on the terms already discussed, provided he was relieved of the engagement to drive his grandson from Spain. The ambassadors of the allies at The Hague, Townshend and Sinzendorff, deliberated on the new secret French offer with Heinsius, who seemed willing to drop article 37 of the proposition made in the spring, containing this engagement, but the English and imperial ambassadors insisted on it obstinately, and only after long negotiation, in February, 1710, the States were allowed a separate discussion with the French representatives at Geertruidenberg by the two allies on the basis of the preliminaries of May, 1709, with the excep-

tion from the French side of article 37 to be further considered. Louis's fear of the complete expulsion of Philip from Spain by the allies victorious there also, of an invasion of France itself, brought him to this extremity. On March 10th the first discussion was had in a yacht on the Moerdijk. Buys and Van der Dussen were the Dutch negotiators, both not to be bribed and inaccessible to the large French offers, proud of the government of the States and not hiding this pride from the allies. In the name of France appeared there the marshal-diplomat d'Huxelles and the shrewd and clever abbé Polignac. Naturally article 37 formed the chief topic of discussion, but the desired end was not reached in four interviews. Louis was prepared for a partition of the Spanish monarchy, finally even for an unconditional renunciation from the French side, but he would never lend his hand to drive out his grandson. Repeatedly the Dutch envoys returned to The Hague, repeatedly they encountered there the unwillingness of the two allies to give up article 37, and the conferences were ended late in July with reproaches from the French plenipotentiaries on the way, in which they had been kept busy for months, while there had been no disposition to yield anything to Louis's sense of honour. They disclaimed responsibility for the blood still to be shed, but soon received a sharp answer from the equally disappointed States-General in a manifesto accusing Louis of ambition and double dealing. Intelligent observers, like Marlborough, Prince Eugene, and many Dutch regents, recognised that too much had been demanded of France and too little security had been offered. It would be long before France was humiliated enough to consent to such demands. The Vienna government was thankful for the course of events, and the emperor even wrote a letter to the States-General, addressing them as *Celsi et potentes Ordines*, "High and Mighty States," a title hitherto carefully withheld by



the imperial court <sup>1</sup> in memory of the old dependence of these provinces on the Hapsburg house.

So the war, already beginning its ninth year, had to be again continued. The two great generals once more headed the allies, pushing from Tournay into France's frontier provinces and laying siege to Douay, Béthune, and other fortresses. These were captured in the course of the year, while the weak army of Villars avoided every battle in the field. The most important events of this year, however, did not take place on the field of battle, or during the negotiations in the republic, but at the English court. Marlborough's numerous enemies had finally succeeded in robbing the powerful favourite of his influence over the queen. The Whigs had supported him and used this influence, but never trusted the intriguing, proud, and ambitious duke; they had long tried to depose him and to escape from his hard dictatorship. His evident endeavour to secure the chief command of the army for life met with violent opposition. Shortly after the battle of Oudenarde the vigorous help of his wife at court was lost to him. In consequence of a palace intrigue, she was supplanted by Lady Masham, now high in the favour of the queen and working secretly with the Tories, and for a time she had to leave the court. The duke succeeded in having his wife return to court, but apparently, in the autumn of 1709, his personal influence with Queen Anne had suffered seriously; even his recommendations for high military posts were not accepted. He quitted the court and threatened to resign, if the queen did not dismiss the favoured lady of the chamber—a humiliating position for Europe's first general! A personal negotiation with the queen seemed to restore him to favour, but the reconciliation was only

<sup>1</sup> Lamberty, vi., p. 79. Portugal, England, and the northern courts had long used this title; France employed that of *Messieurs*.

in appearance: the duchess of Marlborough remained in disgrace, and her mortal enemy kept the field. This was the more critical, because the expenses of the long war began to exceed England's resources and Godolphin, lord treasurer and Marlborough's friend, had to impose ever higher taxes. The Tory party, in league with the leaders of the Church of England, aspired more and more boldly to the government. The influential preacher Sacheverell opposed Marlborough and the Whigs sharply. Sacheverell's trial by the government drew universal attention to his assertions; he was indeed condemned but revered throughout England as a hero and martyr; the queen also honoured him and his defenders openly. Gradually the Tories won. Godolphin was dismissed, the Parliament dissolved, the new Parliament gave them a majority. Marlborough's fall was generally expected, but the intercession of the allies saved him, although his friends in the ministry were replaced by Tories in August and September, 1710.

At Versailles this was viewed with great interest and joy; the allies observed it all with anxiety equally great. There was already talk of an agreement between the winning party and the French court. Then, in April, 1711, the emperor Joseph suddenly died; Charles III. of Spain would presumably succeed him in the German empire. Both England and the States now displayed alarm at the restoration of the empire of Charles V. and were inclined, at least in Spain, to recognise Philip as king. They had not yet allowed homage to be done to Charles III. in Belgium to the vexation of the population much attached to the house of Hapsburg. On account of these occurrences at the courts of London and Vienna the war was feebly carried on by the allies during the whole summer; Prince Eugene remained in Germany, and Marlborough obtained no other advantage than the conquest of little Bouchain, while in Spain



Charles III.'s cause, weakly supported by the allies, fell behind, and all Aragon was lost. Late in 1711 Charles was chosen emperor by the electors, a fact considerably increasing the chances for peace. There was already negotiation between France and England. The French abbé Gaultier, who had been in England with Tallard in 1698, began it in the summer of 1710 by applying secretly to Lady Masham and her friends in the name of de Torcy. In the spring of 1711 these secret relations led to private proposals from the French government to the new secretary of state, Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke, in which de Torcy put in prospect for England the trade with Spain and the Indies, for the States the barrier, for the allies of the maritime powers proper satisfaction.<sup>1</sup> The States-General and Heinsius were in deep secrecy informed of these proposals by the English ambassador Raby, who had taken the place of Townshend. These offers assumed greater significance in the autumn. England speedily appeared desirous of the promised *asiento de negros*, the monopoly of the unchristian but lucrative slave trade with Spain's West Indian colonies, of the great commercial advantages to be obtained, and soon the experienced Mesnager appeared in London. Everything went on secretly until the end of the year, but in October the government at London had already agreed with France on the chief matters and had signed a very secret convention concerning peace and assuring England's interests. England had done what the republic in 1709 at England's instigation had refused to do. The conclusion of a general peace thus became only a question of time. In the first place the republic must be persuaded to assent to the conditions adopted by France and England at London.

With indignation the news had been heard in the republic, and the British government now did its best

<sup>1</sup> Weber, *Der Friede von Utrecht*, p. 30.

to influence the principal statesmen there, Heinsius and Buys first, through the Scotch merchant Drummond of Amsterdam. Bolingbroke, the leader of all, was the right man for such intrigues. But worse trouble followed for the republic. England's new government was not disposed to carry out the barrier treaty, concluded in 1709 with the Whigs. There was to be a barrier, but much less extensive than that stipulated. With great skill Heinsius and his friends were hoodwinked by the two powers. They were promised that the negotiation should soon take place on Dutch soil; half hints were given them of the progress of the secret discussions in London; the circumstance, that the Dutch ambassador there had just died and had not yet been replaced, aided the equivocal game of the English statesmen. Then followed in October the communication from the English that the preliminaries of 1709 must be considered as too severe for France and the barrier treaty as too oppressive on Austria for peace to be possible on this basis, while England wished to conclude no separate peace, it could not prosecute the war on the scale hitherto adopted, as its allies did not keep their promises. A long account showed that the republic also had been found wanting. What remained to be done was plain to everybody. Buys, long since selected as ambassador to London, departed for England in October to endeavour at the eleventh hour to disturb the understanding between France and England and to spare the republic the humiliation of merely approving what was there secretly agreed upon. But he did not succeed and returned home discouraged. He learned of the royal decree relieving Marlborough of the chief command. The political defeat of the States-General was thus accomplished. Prince Eugene, crossing over to England in January, 1712, to rescue his old friend, came too late and soon gave up hope of keeping England in the alliance. People at The Hague realised



that they must submit to the inevitable, because the continuation of the war without England was an impossibility.

The peace congress arranged by England and France was to be held in Utrecht, so that the republic might retain an appearance of coöperation. In January the first envoys of the different powers appeared there. The States had representatives from all the provinces, from Holland Buys and Van der Dussen, among the others the Frisian Goslinga, and Van Rechteren from Overijssel; England sent the bishop of Bristol and the energetic Lord Strafford, then ambassador at The Hague; France d'Huxelles, Polignac, and Mesnager; the emperor Count Zinzendorf. The attitude of the States in the long negotiations was not strong. It could not be denied that peace was necessary, and that there was no longer any thought of removing Philip V. from Spain; but a barrier must be obtained, and an effort had to be made to prevent England from keeping all to itself the trade with the Spanish colonies and especially the profitable slave trade. A bitter feeling against England began to prevail among the Dutch, and the war party even meditated going on with the emperor alone. What this would lead to was shown by the campaign of 1712, directed by Prince Eugene and Marlborough's successor, Lord Ormonde, with the Dutch field-marshal, against Villars, the last general of the last French army. Ormonde's attitude was as ambiguous as that of his government, which desired a truce. Little was effected, although Prince Eugene captured Quesnoy. Ormonde refused constantly to march against Villars and waited for word from his government to declare a truce. When he was able to do this, the greater part of his army had left him and joined Eugene, who now continued the campaign alone, but was compelled to give up the siege of Landrecies after the ignominious flight of the Dutch battalions under

the earl of Albemarle, attacked by Villars with a superior force at Denain (July 24th). The unfortunate last campaign made a deep impression on the Dutch deputies at Utrecht and induced them to yield to English pressure. The understanding between England and France became ever closer. Bolingbroke by a journey to Paris cleared away the last difficulties between the two powers and declared himself ready to conclude a separate peace with France, if necessary. Under these circumstances the negotiation at Utrecht was merely a side issue, and was broken off during four months. After the defeat of Denain it was taken up again, and under new pressure and the menace of a separate peace by England the States finally gave way reluctantly but completely. On December 30, 1712, the Dutch ambassador in London announced the acceptance of the English proposals. The humiliation of the "High and Mighty Lords States" was sealed, but the alliance with England was once more confirmed.

The maritime powers, now again allied for years, did not yet renounce the hope of persuading the emperor to conclude peace. For that purpose the negotiation at Utrecht, broken off again during months, was resumed in February, 1713. But the emperor refused steadfastly to accept the conditions, injurious to him and his house, stipulated by France and England without his knowledge; he went as far as he could to keep the support of the States-General, but this availed nothing. Then finally, on April 11, 1713, peace was signed at Utrecht in a number of separate treaties by England and the States, afterwards also by their allies, Prussia, Portugal, and Savoy. The emperor alone continued the war. With satisfaction France could look back upon the political results of the long war. Spain and its colonies, perhaps too a part of Italy, were won for the French royal house; the object of Louis's policy of the last half cen-



tury was in great part attained, though he had to agree that the two crowns should not be united. The country, however, was exhausted, and years would be necessary for it to regain its former prosperity. But the fame of England had risen high. Military glory on land and sea, diplomatic victories, the possession of Gibraltar and Minorca in Europe, of Hudson Bay, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland, the monopoly of the slave trade, the right of trading with Panama—these were the advantages obtained by the succession war and the policy of William III. for the country, which from now on, as the first maritime power, as the inexhaustible source of subsidies to warring nations on the continent, was to play a decisive part in Europe.

What the republic secured, as its share of the spoils in the treaty with France, was relatively little. The Spanish Netherlands were now to become the Austrian Netherlands and were to be put in the hands of the States to be delivered to the emperor Charles; Spanish Gelderland went to Prussia; the elector of Bavaria was to renounce all claims to Belgium and be restored in his Bavarian lands. As for the ardently desired barrier, which was to be granted by the emperor for the delivery of the Netherlands, it was considerably limited by the last agreement between the maritime powers (January 30, 1713). France ceded for it Menin, Tournay, Furnes, De Knokke, Loo, Dixmuiden, and Ypres, while Hoei, Liege, Luxemburg, Namur, Charleroi, and Nieuwpoort were to remain garrisoned by Dutch troops. Furthermore, the States were to receive for the maintenance of fortifications and soldiers a million guilders annually from the best revenues of the Spanish Netherlands. France was to arrange for the States a commercial treaty with Spain; trade in the Spanish Netherlands was to be regulated by the three powers; between France and the States a special treaty of commerce for twenty-

five years was to be concluded. Thus the great war came to an end which did not answer the expectations cherished as late as 1710. With a neglected navy, an army weakened by the campaigns and losses of the last years, an almost exhausted treasury, the republic for many years would have to give up its importance as a great power; its commerce had suffered seriously and would hereafter, in the world's markets under less favourable circumstances, have to meet its powerfully developing rival on the other side of the North Sea that had quite surpassed the little neighbour. In the opinion of its best statesmen its only hope for the future lay in adherence to a close alliance with this fortunate competitor and in following the chariot of victory. Thus alone could it participate in the advantages secured everywhere by this rival. The peace of Utrecht was rightly understood by Polignac, when he told the envoys of the States: *On traitera de la paix chez vous, pour vous et sans vous*, a revenge for the humiliation of France shortly before at Geertruidenberg deeply felt by the same diplomat. The negotiation at Geertruidenberg was the last occasion, on which the republic had any chance of appearing as arbitrator between France and England. At Utrecht it had to accept what both prescribed for it.







## CHAPTER II

### RULE OF THE REGENTS IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

**A**FTER William III.'s death the government of the republic came into the hands of men calling themselves "republicans" in opposition to the monarchical tendencies of the house of Orange. Indisputably the republicans were now lords and masters in the republic, and they seemed likely to continue so for years, since the young prince of Orange and Nassau, preparing to make his stadtholdership of the two northern provinces a step to higher dignities like his great cousin, had been drowned in the Moerdijk, and his posthumous son for a long time would not be able to take up the father's work. But there was still a young prince bearing the name of Orange. During his whole life the young William Charles Henry Friso signed himself "prince of Orange and Nassau," like his father, and the Dutch people preferred to call him by the first name. The Orange party did not give up the hope of seeing the Frisian stadtholder take the "eminent" place of the renowned stadtholders from the old family; the mother-guardian, Maria Louise of Hesse-Cassel, was ever on the watch to have her son secure what her husband had failed to obtain.

The republicans had little to fear from this side so long as they succeeded in conjuring the perils that might threaten the state. They knew that their opponents

would stir up the people again on the approach of danger. An unfortunate war might have such a fatal result for them, especially a war with France, the national enemy, which for half a century had assumed the place of Spain over against the republic. The conciliation of France and the preservation of peace in Europe appeared to them of the highest consequence.<sup>1</sup> Wherever fire might break out, the political interests of France could be disturbed. Restless Sweden, fermenting Russia, Spain eager for adventures under the first Bourbon must be kept in view; the military power of Prussia was rising on the eastern border. And the two allies, England and Austria, had to be watched. The sequel of the peace of Utrecht: the negotiations between France and the emperor leading to the peace of Rastadt in March, 1714; those between the republic and Spain; the negotiations concerning the barrier begun with the emperor immediately after the peace of Rastadt—all had difficulties. The emperor would not hear to the interference of England in these last negotiations, and England wanted it on account of the agreement of 1709 with the republic; the emperor refused to recognise what was stipulated at Utrecht without his consent; France secretly opposed the progress of the affair. So it was a long time before the imperial offers could be reconciled with the demands of the republic. The imperial government showed anger at these high demands and even assumed a threatening attitude.

In the midst of these negotiations the queen of England died suddenly, and with the strong support of the government at The Hague the Whigs succeeded in bringing about the elevation of her chosen successor, the

<sup>1</sup> See for the foreign policy of the republic in these years Bussemaker's articles in the *Gids* of 1899, iii., p. 33, and in the *Bijdragen voor vaderl. gesch. en oudheidk. Vierde Reeks*, i., p. 263.



elector of Hanover, as George I. This change brought the Whigs in England again into power and at once improved the relations between the maritime nations, as the new Hanoverian dynasty during its first years needed the republic's support. The old alliance was immediately renewed by the old friends of Heinsius and Slingelandt, among whom Lord Townshend occupied a prominent place; the Whigs did not forget that the Dutch statesmen had advised their new king on his journey through to England to govern with them. Furthermore, George I., who was more of a Hanoverian than an Englishman, regarded the republic as the bridge from England to the continent, as an inestimable link for his policy directed more to the interest of Hanover than to that of England. Excessive was the joy in the republic at this change for the better in its relations with the ally, but this joy was quickly tempered by the English government's attitude in the barrier affair. The negotiations regarding this were continued at Antwerp in October, 1714, now with the coöperation of England, which manifested slight inclination to help the republic in its commercial plans. When the danger of a Jacobite invasion constrained England to ask aid of the republic, and the latter immediately offered its Scotch regiments, the English government assisted in earnest, and the repeatedly interrupted negotiations were resumed. After more than fifty sittings these negotiations led on November 15, 1715, to the signing of the Antwerp barrier-treaty, which agreed in general with the arrangement made at Utrecht.<sup>1</sup> Namur, Tournay, Menin, Furnes, Warneton, Ypres, and the fort De Knokke became barrier places garrisoned by the republic; in the strategically important Dendermonde there was to be a mixed garrison; in case of danger of war Dutch troops must be admitted into all the threatened fortresses; in barrier cities two-fifths of the neces-

<sup>1</sup> Du Mont, *Corps Dipl.*, viii., i., p. 458.

sary garrison were to be furnished by the republic; the emperor paid 1,250,000 guilders for the support of the troops secured by the revenues of Brabant and Flanders; Venloo, St. Michiel, Stevensweerd, and Montfort came entirely to the States; a rectification of the frontier in Flanders subjected in fact the whole country as far as Ghent to the republic; a commercial treaty with England and the republic was to be concluded on the basis of the peace of Münster, thus closing the Scheldt; England guaranteed the treaty, by which the henceforth Austrian Netherlands were recognised as the "inalienable possession" of the house of Hapsburg.

This was the poor remnant of the treaty made in 1709, sometimes lauded as a great diplomatic victory, but in reality a hindrance to the republic, which never had any good but much trouble from this already antiquated arrangement. This was the only tangible political advantage brought by the republic out of the fatal succession war, the chain binding it for over half a century to England and Austria. Austria and the southern Netherlands felt deeply the degradation of being subjected to the military guardianship of the republic; speedily the latter saw that, with the changed policy of France, the barrier had lost its military and political importance. France considered the barrier as a constant threat. It might have been of inestimable use in the days of De Witt and William III., but in those of Slingelandt and Walpole it was an anachronism. The republic could not be brought to go further than the conclusion of this treaty, and Heinsius and his friends would not listen to a renewal of the alliance between Austria and the maritime powers. More inclination was shown towards France. In January, 1717, the French regent, by sending his confidant, the abbé Dubois, persuaded both the maritime powers to a triple alliance, concluded at The Hague, for confirming the peace of Utrecht with a



guarantee of the possessions in Europe of the three powers. Thenceforth France called the States "High and Mighty Lords." From a commercial point of view the treaty of November 15, 1715, was as advantageous to the maritime powers as it was disastrous to the Austrian Netherlands. The latter's ships and sailors went over to Dunkirk; their industry moved to the neighbouring cities of France; their commerce ventured its capital now only in Dutch or English enterprises. The republic could be reassured; from this side no further competition was to be dreaded. This was its great benefit from the peace.

After the conclusion of peace and of the negotiations concerning the barrier, the republic, closely allied with England, was considered for years as a great power and as such was involved in all the political happenings of the world. The union between the maritime powers was carefully fostered from both sides, by the Whig statesmen long dominant under the first Georges and by the Dutch politicians of William III.'s school, in the interest of the world's peace and in that of the Protestant Hanoverian dynasty menaced until the middle of the century by Jacobite machinations. There was more anxious care on the Dutch side than on the English, because the republic's internal condition excluded all thought of independent action. But the wealth of the Dutch state and its commercial power made it for twenty-five years longer an ally to be desired, if not a foe to be feared. Could not the republic, with its apparently inexhaustible riches, cause armies to rise out of the ground and fleets out of the ocean? Had it not such excellent statesmen as Heinsius and Slingelandt, Hop and Fagel? The prestige of the republic, won in the beautiful days of the seventeenth century, long endured. But its anxious striving for peace in the interest of its commerce and internal condition, its timid avoidance of difficulties, its dread

of asserting itself, speedily lessened the consideration it enjoyed. Finally it derived that consideration mainly from that of its ever more powerful ally, in whose shadow it drew back, and to whose initiative it left everything. Voluntarily it abdicated its place in the council of Europe's powers. Only its commercial interests ruled its policy; nothing else could entice it to political action.

In just those days the political condition of Europe was incessantly changing. Sweden, under Charles XII. again disturbing the north and sending out privateers to prey upon Dutch and English commerce in the Baltic, might have been brought to reason by joint action of the maritime powers. The republic desired no war and was only ready for mediation between the nations at war with one another. The Dutch fleet of twelve ships under rear-admiral Veth, uniting with the British fleet at Elsinore in 1715, had orders to avoid hostilities against Sweden and only to protect the merchantmen. In the next year but six ships were sent under the commander Grave for the same purpose. It was manifest that the republic was of no mind to wave the torch of war in the north. A timely settlement was made of the affair of Charles XII.'s secret intrigues with the English Jacobites,<sup>1</sup> in which the Swedish king commissioned his agent, the adventurer, baron von Görtz, to work privately in the republic also for Swedish interests. In 1718 the republic confined itself to sending out a squadron of twelve ships for the protection of its merchant vessels. It managed to refrain from actual hostilities in the north, until the death of the restless king in November, 1718, gave occasion for the confirmation of the seriously threatened peace, Hanover receiving Bremen and Verden, and the new Swedish queen, Ulrica Eleonora, stopping privateering. Not before 1721 did the peace of Nystad

<sup>1</sup> Bussemaker, in *Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis, land-en volkenkunde*, 1901, p. 65.



put an end to the war between Russia and Sweden, which latter lost a large part of its Baltic provinces to the former and saw its supremacy in the north come to naught.

The attitude of the republic in these affairs was not calculated to increase its prestige, yet this was necessary, because, though Denmark and Sweden were no longer to be feared, a new power was springing up in Russia. The republic had economic interests in Russia to defend from the end of the sixteenth century. At Archangel, Moscow, and the new St. Petersburg Dutch merchants were first. The creation of the Russian fleet, the establishment of industries, the construction of canals gave work to hundreds of Hollanders in Russia, especially after czar Peter's first journey. On the other hand Russians came to Holland to learn. The republic might be called the cradle of the new Russia, which was growing to a great power under its energetic czar, who admired Holland above all, liked to show himself to foreigners in the garb of a Dutch sea-captain, and spoke the dialect of Dutch sailors. The first settled Russian ambassador at The Hague was appointed in 1699. Czar Peter's second visit to the republic and France, from November, 1716, to September, 1717, saw the mighty monarch glorified in quite a different fashion from the reception accorded to the "remarkable barbarian" of twenty years earlier.<sup>1</sup> Once more Peter visited the beloved Amsterdam and Zaandam and greeted cordially his old friends and teachers. In the midst of his visits he did not forget politics. While viewing England's action in the north with distrust, he would not hear to further commercial advantages for the Netherlanders. On the side of the States there was also caution. The interests of Dutch commerce in Russia and in the Baltic ports acquired by Russia were so considerable that the republic had

<sup>1</sup> Scheltema, *Rusland en de Nederlanden*, iii., p. 331.

every reason to live in friendship with Russia and made no difficulty about giving the czar the title of "emperor of Russia," but it abstained from a closer alliance with the not yet securely established new power of the north.

Neutral, as in the north, was the republic also in the important affairs of Spain and Italy, which at this time attracted all Europe's attention. Cardinal Alberoni was then playing his adventurous part and was seeking to make Spain into a great power as of old. Amid the alliances dividing Europe into groups he hoped to find one for Spain that would put it once more in possession of the Italian lands lost by the peace of Utrecht. He stood in opposition to Austria, whose emperor still bore the title of Charles III., king of Spain, and mourned the loss of the Spanish crown. Suddenly Spain conquered the island of Sardinia (1717). This attack stirred up the whole of Europe. England, France, and the republic united with Austria for the maintenance of the Utrecht peace, and the triple became a quadruple alliance. Hesitatingly the republic consented to the quadruple alliance, and it left action against Spain to its allies. Spain's attack upon Sicily, assigned to Savoy by the peace of Utrecht. was beyond endurance (1718). The English fleet destroyed the weak Spanish one off Syracuse, and a great war threatened. The French armies were gathering, supported by English troops, and were invading Spain, while the Austrians restored order in Sicily. The banishment of Alberoni put an end to the brief splendour of the fallen monarchy, and February 1, 1720, Spain submitted to the wishes of the four powers. The aged council pensionary, Heinsius, was still the leader but in quite another way than in the days of William III. Then the interest of a general policy, of the balance of power in Europe, stood in the foreground, now the interest of commerce predominated in all political relations, especially since the disadvantageous



peace, to which England's attitude had constrained the republic. In general it cannot be said that the republic's exertions were without good result. About 1720 peace was everywhere assured, and Dutch commerce could spread its wings unhindered, except where English and Hanseatic competition had profited by circumstances.

There was less success to boast of in domestic conditions. These were anything but rose-coloured at the conclusion of the peace of Utrecht. The finances, even of Holland, were quite exhausted by the long war. It was impossible to impose new taxes; new loans could only be made at a high rate of interest; the "idle vermin of civil society,"<sup>1</sup> the farmers of the revenue, were accused of gross abuses; the confusion in municipal and provincial governments reached such a height that the need of a stadtholder was loudly proclaimed in many circles. Various remedies were considered for improving the state of the finances. Holland finally reduced its four per cent. bonds to two and a half per cent. by taxing them a hundredth and a two-hundredth penny, and the States-General in 1716 followed this example by diminishing the interest on their bonds by one per cent. There is no better account of the decline and of the means of remedying it than the *Discourse on the defects in the present constitution of the government of the state of the United Netherlands*, written in 1716 by Slingelandt, who was secretary of the council of state from 1690 to 1725.<sup>2</sup> During nine months, from March 18th to December 3, 1715, the office of the union, the public treasury, had to be closed, and afterwards this was again and again threatened. In short the machine of state stood still, and it was conceivable that the union would fall apart at the least shock from within or without.

<sup>1</sup> Lamberty, *Mémoires*, viii., p. 532.

<sup>2</sup> *Staatkundige geschriften*, i., p. 171.

In these circumstances the Estates of Overijssel on April 4, 1716,<sup>1</sup> presented a plan for economy with a better mutual understanding for strengthening the union. This was recommended to the consideration of the provinces by the States-General, but when nothing came of it, Overijssel, where Adolf Hendrik, count van Rechteren, was the moving spirit, complained of the inaction and proposed the calling, as in 1651, of a Great Assembly. The council of state and the leaders of military affairs approved of the idea, and on August 7th the States-General summoned for October 1st such an assembly at The Hague for an exchange of thought concerning the number of troops, the removal of "discrepant sentiments," and the restoration of order in the state. The consent of the provinces, excepting City and Land, came in before the end of August. But wrangling now began in the various Estates on all sorts of questions. At last the deliberations commenced on November 28th in the Treves Hall. Rechteren opened them with words of patriotism to the thirty-four members present. The slow beginning, the absence of deputies from City and Land, where all was in confusion, the fact that full authority was not bestowed upon the members, presaged little good. During nine months the debates were continued. An agreement was reached upon thirty-two thousand men for the militia. No resolution was taken respecting means of constraining unwilling provinces. The wretched state of the finances was not improved. In May, 1717, a threatened bankruptcy was averted by closing the treasury for three days ostensibly on account of the kirmess at The Hague. After everything had stood still during seven weeks, the assembly ended September 14, 1717, with a speech by Rechteren again, who confessed with discouragement that nothing had really been

<sup>1</sup> J. G. de Vos, *De tweede groote vergadering*, in *Bijdr. voor vaderl. gesch. en oudheidk.*, *Derde Reeks*, ix., p. 277.



done. "With astonishment and extreme grief of soul," he declared, "that we think the republic lost, if things go on longer in this way." The council of state was of no other opinion, when it asserted: "It was to be justified neither before God nor men, if miracles were always depended upon" in a state, which could only continue to exist as a "wonderful work of divine providence." Thus ended, to the despair of all right-minded people, the second Great Assembly, which was to have saved the state.

Fortunately the management of the state remained with the tried men who had led it during the war. The aged Heinsius was still living, disappointed more than ever after the peace of Utrecht, but he died August 3, 1720, and was succeeded by Isaac van Hoornbeek, of like opinions but less able, hitherto pensionary of Rotterdam. Slingelandt and Fagel, Hop and Buys, Van der Dussen and Van Rechteren still stood shoulder to shoulder. Even a bad government may be conducted by exceptional personages without ruining the state. But it is more than plain that not much power could go out from the republic in these circumstances. There were other troubles also. A cattle plague ravaged the country for years, killing thousands of cattle, and the loss could only be made good slowly by importing Danish cattle on a large scale. Many considered this plague "God's sword of vengeance over the Netherlands."<sup>1</sup> Floods in the spring of 1715 and at Christmas of 1717 caused immense damage to houses and land in all the sea provinces, not least in discordant City and Land, where in the later flood were lost 2000 lives, 15,000 houses, 14,000 cattle and horses, 22,000 swine and sheep. What the elements left unharmed was assailed by a serious financial crisis. The love of speculation found new food in the at first brilliant results of John Law's bank and Mississippi

<sup>1</sup> Title of Halma's poem of 1714.

Company in France from 1716 to 1720. The swindle spread from France to England and soon also to the republic, where the stock company was native and speculation had long been a burning evil. The speedy fall of Law's clever "system," in the spring of 1720, caused the bad effects to be felt less here, because the cautious Hollanders were among the first "realisers," who got out with a good profit.<sup>1</sup> It was worse with the much sought shares of the English South Sea Company, whose rapid rise, in the summer of 1720, from three hundred to over one thousand per cent., made many "wind companies" spring up in Holland and Zealand during August and September. There was a madness as in the days of the tulipomania. Men wanted to form companies as freely as in France and England in order to grow rich quickly. Here also, as in England and France, rich and poor, statesmen and merchants, scholars and artists, citizens and peasants, mechanics and sailors, clerks and servants worshipped the golden calf and were often reduced to beggary to enrich a few. Sensible men saw with anxiety the "stock fever" rise and endeavoured to prevent "the great picture of folly," but the desire for wealth, the gambling fever rapidly increased, favoured here and there by municipal governments infected with the fury for speculation. Commercial companies were the order of the day; great financial projects were put forth in the most extravagant terms; it is estimated that the total nominal capital amounted to 1150 million guilders.<sup>2</sup> The shares of the East and West India Companies participated in the inflation: the latter rose from 40 in 1719 to 600 per cent. and suddenly dropped to 100 per cent.; the former went up from 400 to 700 and 1200 per cent. There were dreams of great wealth, of

<sup>1</sup> Vissering, *Het groote tafereel der dwaasheid*, in *Gids*, 1856, i., p. 654.

<sup>2</sup> Le Long, *Koophandel van Amsterdam*, ii. (1727), p. 554.



making small cities as flourishing as Amsterdam; vast plans were formed for new harbours and canals and industries; Utrecht was to become a port, Enkhuizen to get back its splendour, Woerden to be a great manufacturing city. The Israelites so zealous in speculation were attracted to small places by all sorts of advantages. Men literally fought to subscribe for shares. The French coffee-house at Amsterdam became too small for this business, which soon occupied all Kalver Street and the Dam and lasted far into the night amid tumult and vociferation. But speedily came the disillusion, the "terrible hurricane," the "pitiful tragedy." Law took to flight, and his company collapsed. The South Sea shares dropped in the summer to 130 per cent. and brought many to the beggar's staff. The fall of both the great foreign enterprises influenced those here. Many companies did not even come into being; others in a short time stopped; and the end was that hundreds from sudden wealth fell into equally sudden poverty. There was one popular rising in Amsterdam (October 5th) against the English coffee-house, where the speculation in stocks was carried on most zealously. Many caricatures and pamphlets, satires and dramas against the "mad trading in wind" held up to derision the folly of the "stockholders" of the "new-fashioned business." A folio, the *Great picture of folly*, included all kinds of projects. From them Pieter Langendijk derived the subjects for two of his best plays. The effect of the mad speculation was long felt. Signs were everywhere of the approaching ruin of the renowned republic.

Was it strange that to many occurred the thought of the old remedy for trouble, the appointment of a stadtholder, and naturally of the young heir of the Oranges? By birth he was hereditary stadtholder of Friesland. In City and Land the Frisian nobleman Sicco van Goslinga with other lords succeeded (1718) in conferring the dig-

nity of stadtholder upon the young prince of Orange.<sup>1</sup> Drenthe followed four years later, and then the Orange party began to be active in Gelderland and Overijssel. The elevation of the prince to the ancestral dignities in Gelderland would have brought four provinces under the authority of a stadtholder. Maria Louise saw the great importance of this, but so too did the opposing party. Holland entered into consultation with Zealand, Utrecht, and Overijssel, which had years before declared in favour of a stadtholderless government. A sharp letter in the name of Holland was sent to Gelderland, warning against the proposed measure. Gelderland appointed the prince on November 2d, but bound him to instructions that limited his power considerably in comparison with that of William III. Not trusting the "paper harness" of limitations by instructions, etc., the four provinces resolved to oppose anything of the kind in their territory. Goslinga did his best to calm the agitation; he tried to reconcile the princess with the statesmen of Holland. But he could not prevent the four provinces in the spring of 1723 from resolving solemnly to adhere to the form of government without a stadtholder.

Thus the power of the regents remained untouched in four provinces at least, and that of the future stadtholder in the others was so abbreviated that the rule of the regents might still be spoken of there. In consequence of contracts, alliances, and agreements between the ruling persons and families this government of the regents assumed more and more the character of a close caste, owing to marriages among themselves exclusively that of a family domination, which must eventually bring the authority over the country into the hands of a small number of oligarchs. The families possessing the government of city and country soon regarded themselves as having a right to that government; there was

<sup>1</sup> Slothouwer, *Sicco van Goslinga*, p. 99.



no more talk of rights of the people or of ancient privileges after the failure of the efforts of the guilds and tribunes in Gelderland and elsewhere at the beginning of the century. "The citizens are shut out of the administration of the high government, and no advice or vote is asked in affairs of state," says Lieven de Beaufort in 1737 very justly.<sup>1</sup> Having gone so far, they did not hesitate to sweeten the toil of government by the enjoyment of profits from important offices, which fell to them now without opposition. The taxes became to them a resource to be disposed of at will, provided the administration and the first demands of personal and general security were cared for; justice was degraded to a means of establishing their authority or to a source of revenue for the judges; the army and navy were institutions for enriching children and members of families through lucrative posts; even the church seemed a way to advance the income of members of the government. Gradually in appointments much less attention was given to ability than to relationship and personal or family profit. Intermarriages strengthened the bond. In every city there was a close union of a few families ruling the place, and it could only be broken by dissensions. These dissensions, cabals, and intrigues were for years the only corrective of the oligarchic, arbitrary power, with which city and country were governed by the little "kings" of the republic.

There was danger also in the foreign policy. Fortunately the republic still disposed of some able statesmen of the old stamp. So long as Van Hoornbeek, Hop, Slingelandt, Fagel, Goslinga, and Buys stood at the head of the state, the republic retained a certain influence on the course of affairs in Europe. After Alberoni's fall Spain did not give up its designs upon Italy. A more adventurous man even became chief there, the Groningen

<sup>1</sup> *De vryheit in den burgerstaet*, p. 130.

nobleman, Johan Willem van Ripperda.<sup>1</sup> He early went over to Protestantism from the Catholic faith, that cut him off from government employment, and appeared in the government of his province and in the States-General. In 1715 he departed as ambassador for Madrid, where his ability attracted Alberoni's attention. He was soon involved in all political matters, became a Catholic again, resigned as ambassador, and then stood high in favour with the king and queen. Falling out with Alberoni, he was in disgrace for a time, but rose once more after that statesman's decline. In 1724 he persuaded the king to seek a reconciliation with Austria. Sent to Vienna, he brought about peace, April 1, 1725, and a close alliance between the two crowns. Spain's foreign affairs were now placed entirely in his hands, and he was the omnipotent statesman, ennobled with a ducal title. But his sun of fortune was speedily eclipsed. His financial and diplomatic intrigues were disclosed, and he was imprisoned in the summer of 1726. His part in Spain was at an end, but his work lived longer.

While Heinsius was still living, a congress of the powers at Cambrai had been resolved upon, the republic taking no part in it. The purpose was to settle all disputes between the powers by negotiation. Spanish-Austrian questions were discussed there during four years. The Vienna treaties suddenly stopped these tedious negotiations, alarm being felt at the union between the two crowns. The consequence was a defensive alliance at Hanover, for the maintenance of the treaties of peace, between France, Prussia, and England (September, 1725). The republic was invited to join it, while a similar invitation came from the Vienna allies. The establishment of an East India Company at Ostend in December, 1722, had awakened great resentment towards

<sup>1</sup> W. A. van Verschuer, *Het staatkundig bedrijf van Johan Willem, baron van Ripperda*. (Leiden, 1861).



Austria. At last (August 9, 1726) the States took the side of the allies of Hanover to support the treaties of Münster and Oliva, which had restored peace in central and northern Europe. In the diplomatic document the interest of commerce came again to the fore, and in behalf of it there was a willingness to risk a war against the Vienna allies. The army and navy were considerably strengthened. Ostend feared a possible siege or bombardment, because the maritime powers and France might easily have become masters of the Austrian Netherlands. The two camps dividing Europe made ready for a general war, and the allies of Hanover were preparing a campaign in the southern Netherlands, when the peace-loving French minister, de Fleury, succeeded at the eleventh hour, in the spring of 1727, in conjuring the storm with the aid of Robert Walpole, the head of the English government, and with the coöperation of the republic averse to war. The emperor saw himself obliged in the interest of peace to suspend his flourishing Ostend company for seven years. A congress at Soissons was to remove the differences between the powers. Dutch deputies took part in this congress. It met first in July, 1728, but helped little to bring about a general pacification. The republic was chiefly interested in the negotiations concerning the affairs of East Friesland and the Ostend company. From the emperor's side came the request that the maritime powers, his former allies, should recognise and guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction, by which his hereditary states at his death were to fall to his daughter, Maria Theresa. The negotiations had small result. A new Quadruple Alliance between France, England, and Spain (1729), that of Seville, which the republic joined in November, was directed against Austria and its commercial plans. A new war threatened, this time against Austria. The congress of Soissons began to break up, but Fleury managed to keep the peace,

sustained by the peaceful inclinations of the maritime powers, which, however, collected a fleet in the English Channel, including sixteen Dutch ships under vice-admiral Sommelsdijk, more of a naval force than had been equipped in years.

The more vigorous action of the republic was due to the fact that its foreign affairs were ruled by two extraordinary men, Simon van Slingelandt and François Fagel, the pillars of the republic, whose personal consideration helped to make The Hague *il centro di quasi tutti gli affari*, as a Piedmontese diplomat testifies in 1723. Slingelandt became council pensionary, July 17, 1727, in place of Van Hoornbeek, who had died a month earlier. Like the secretary Fagel, his brother-in-law, he was well on in years, in the sixties, and had played a great part as secretary of the council under William III. Honest and able, an excellent speaker and writer, cautious and clever, experienced in diplomatic matters, a "living index of all the events, in which the state has been interested," he was one of the most influential statesmen of Europe. Coöperation with England in maintaining the European balance of power and peace was the chief aim of his foreign policy. With regard to his domestic policy he had to promise neither directly nor indirectly to work for any change in the form of government, and so long as he held office he was not to aid in the elevation of the prince. It was another case with his friend, the secretary, who was generally known as an adherent of the Orange party. The chances of this party increased with the years of the prince, who became of age in 1729. He had studied at Franeker and Utrecht and appeared a youth of an agreeable expression and bright blue eyes, much talent and grace, desirous of doing his duty, well but rather delicately brought up among women, developed especially in law and economics, cultivated, acquainted with the language and literature of his own



country, of England, France, Italy, and Germany, as well as with Latin, amiable, virtuous, and mild; he liked to write, and possessed some eloquence and an excellent memory. He was not a soldier; his weak body, his small and somewhat deformed figure made him little adapted to that, and his inclinations did not go that way; he was better suited to civil government; but his lack of independence and initiative, his too great confidence in men, his excessive gentleness and kindness gave little expectation that he would vigorously assert his rights or carry out necessary reforms.<sup>1</sup> The hopes of this party rose high in consequence of the marriage, proposed by his mother and not rejected by the English royal house, with the oldest daughter of King George II. of England, who had succeeded his father in 1727. When, after the prince's majority, the English government reverted to the subject at The Hague, it perceived that fortune was not favouring him in the republic. For the time the prince had to be content with the stadtholdership over four provinces, limited as his power was in them. In 1729 he assumed that of Gelderland, City and Land, and Drenthe, in 1731 that of Friesland. His further course was prescribed by circumstances—to sit still and wait. He could not assert his rights to the marquisate of Veere and Flushing, as stadtholder to a place in the council of state, as captain-general of four provinces to the rank of general in the army of the States. His admirer, Duncan, an energetic Scotchman, succeeded in the summer of 1732 in ending the dissensions between Prussia and the prince. The latter gave up the principality of Orange, but reserved the right to call one of his lordships by this name and to bear its title and arms, thus terminating the long dispute about this inheritance.

<sup>1</sup> This character sketch is partly borrowed from that by his intimate friend Burmania, after his death sent to his wife (Private archives of the Queen, William IV., No. 301.)

The English marriage plans accomplished nothing towards making the prince a general of infantry. The representative of the English government at The Hague, young Lord Chesterfield, was a great admirer of Slingelandt and followed his advice in everything. So the prince was urged by England also to keep still and wait. George II., like his father more of a Hanoverian than an Englishman, wished for nothing more than to respect the "inseparable interests" of England and the republic and to live with the latter "in the most perfect union."

This union was greatly promoted by Slingelandt's endeavours to restore the old agreement between the maritime powers and Austria. His *Pensées impartiales* of 1729, a memoir on European politics of the time, aimed to improve the relations of the emperor and the maritime powers by giving him the desired guarantees of his daughter's succession and obtaining in exchange some concession to Spain's demands in Italy. It was to the interest of the maritime powers to prevent the fall of the Hapsburg state, a counterpoise to France in Europe. Walpole, the leader of England's policy, soon commissioned Chesterfield with Slingelandt and the Austrian ambassador at The Hague, Zinzendorf, to make the draught of a treaty between the maritime powers and Austria. This treaty was received with great joy by Prince Eugene of Savoy at Vienna, and was concluded there March 18, 1731, between England and the emperor. In it the maritime powers guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction, by which the emperor, in default of sons, secured the succession in his hereditary lands to his oldest daughter, Maria Theresa; on the other hand, the emperor allowed the occupation of Tuscany, Parma, and Piacenza by Spanish troops, and promised to stop all navigation to India from the southern Netherlands and to dissolve the Ostend company; in general each guaranteed the others' rights and possessions. The new Vienna treaty



was definitively signed by the States on February 20, 1732, to the vexation of France, which saw itself again isolated. The renewal of the old alliance was politically of much importance. It was not the last important act of the aged council pensionary, who guided affairs five years longer and sought especially to maintain the neutrality of the republic in European questions. In the Polish question, arising in 1733 on the death of Augustus of Saxony, king of Poland, and soon leading to a war of France, Spain, and Sardinia against Austria, he secured at first France's recognition of the neutrality of the Austrian Netherlands, refused Austria's requests for support, but finally with England's help and under a threat of action in favour of Austria brought about a truce that became a peace in 1735. As long as Slingelandt was living, his personal consideration in Europe was great enough to make the republic recognised in all events, even in the difficulties between Spain and Portugal, where it mediated with England. How little prepared it was to assert its rights vigorously, appeared most plainly from its weak attitude towards the Barbary piratical states, particularly towards Morocco.

There was weakness also in internal affairs. The Orange party had hoped that the prince's marriage would accomplish something in his favour, and on the occasion of the marriage (1734) George II. had intimated to the States-General that he wished by it to strengthen the union with the republic. But the States answered coolly that, appreciating the king's confidence in the "free republic," they received his daughter willingly in their territory. Soon after his marriage the prince went to Prince Eugene's camp on the Rhine to take part in the campaign as a volunteer, but this military experience did not procure his promotion to be a general of infantry. In the council pensionary and Fagel he found little support: the former gave him only "fine words," complained

the prince, and the other had always "a heavy head." He thought of retiring to his German possessions, but this seemed wrong in view of the traditions of his family. He would not use vigorous measures to compel the regents to put him at the head, but he quietly waited in accordance with the advice of the cautious Fagel. The prince himself demanded nothing, but Gelderland repeatedly urged the other provinces to appoint him to the offices of his forefathers, remarking upon the fall of the finances and credit, of the nation's military and naval strength, upon "the declining reputation of this state among the neighbouring powers." Holland was not persuaded to change. The venerable council pensionary, long tormented by the gout, died on December 1, 1736. The country had "lost its head," the only man who could carry on affairs amid the growing confusion. His successor in the following spring was the treasurer-general, Anthonie van der Heim, able but not a man of force and energy, while he was bound down by a "report" that commanded him to have a care that the present form of government should be preserved in every respect, and to communicate to the States whatever came to his ears concerning plans against it. The continuance of the form of government seemed assured—so long as the state itself should be able to exist.







### CHAPTER III

#### COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY ABOUT 1740

THE long war at the beginning of the century with France and Spain had given a hard blow to Dutch commerce, especially to commerce with southern Europe and Spanish America, and a bad influence was exerted also upon commerce with the northern regions of Europe. Dutch commerce was still a carrying trade, selling the products of one country at a profit in another country and loading the ships with "returns" from the latter. Neutrals, Danes, and inhabitants of Bremen and Hamburg, were now getting possession of the carrying trade. Not only commerce with Spain and France suffered serious losses, but also that with Italy and the Levant had to contend with the same difficulties. Privateers from Dunkirk captured merchantmen that were not sufficiently armed or escorted. The general war in the Baltic lands impeded Dutch commerce there extremely. Further came the piracies of the Barbary corsairs and of the wild filibusters in the Antilles, the scum of all nations. Owing to privateering, piracy, and the stricter surveillance of the Spanish authorities the clandestine trade of the republic with the American colonies of Spain went to pieces. Even the naval victories off Cadiz and Vigo harmed instead of helped the Dutch merchants, because the goods captured and burned belonged in great part to them.<sup>1</sup> The great companies suffered also under these

<sup>1</sup> See Knuttel, pamphlet No. 16,231: *Korte schets van's Lands welvaren*, p. 14.

conditions, as they found it more difficult to dispose of their wares, and dividends and shares felt the effect. The transfer of commerce to the neutrals could not be prevented. These neutrals were the Danes and mainly Hamburg and Bremen. Hamburg rose rapidly, so that after Amsterdam it might be called the most important commercial port of Europe. Once commerce chooses other channels, it does not so easily return to the old road. The Dutch merchants experienced this after the peace of Utrecht. Not only had they to fight Hamburg, to contend with the desire of Denmark, Sweden, young Russia, and growing Prussia to carry on business for themselves, to make head against the commercial companies springing up all over Europe like mushrooms, but France and England rose to an unprecedented commercial greatness.

France, using its good understanding with Spain, secured privileges for its merchants in Spain, in Spanish colonies, and in Spanish possessions in Italy. English commerce developed even more vigorously, and the great city on the Thames soon boasted of a population twice as large as that of Amsterdam. The Whig government helped the English merchants, its strongest supporters. The union of England and Scotland in 1706 brought the latter under the Navigation Act, favourable to domestic commerce and industry, but fatal to foreign competition, which in general only allowed the Dutch to import into England cattle, butter, and cheese. A powerful navy, greater than that of any other nation, protected English interests over the whole world. From the beginning of the eighteenth century dates a general uplift in England's economic and commercial life, that could only redound to the republic's disadvantage. Everywhere the Dutch merchant encountered the English merchant and saw him slowly but surely obtain the upper hand. But Dutch commerce had not entirely dis-



appeared in the first years after the peace of Utrecht. The republic still ranked with England as a commercial power. Every year 130 to 140 ships sailed to Spanish ports, 250 to 300 to French ports; the salt trade with Portugal employed 300 ships; the East India Company sent home annually 25 to 30 richly laden vessels; more than 1000 Dutch vessels sailed yearly through the Sound; the Dutch flag was shown in every harbour; and for at least half a century longer Amsterdam was a world warehouse. Complaints, however, were already heard of a falling off, and the exhaustion of the republic did not permit a revival of the old energy as in England.

In these circumstances the plan of a new transmarine company in Ostend was one more menace to the commerce of the republic, which it must oppose with all its might, if it did not wish to lose the last fruit of the war, its economic supremacy over the south. During the rage for great companies about 1720 some Belgian merchants at Antwerp planned the foundation of an "Imperial and Royal Company" in Ostend. At the end of 1722 the new company received its charter from the emperor, who was much inclined to promote the economic development of his states. The Dutch and English governments protested vehemently, and in opposing the Belgians the former denied the right of every nation to the "free sea," a principle that De Groot and his friends had defended a hundred years earlier. The Belgian merchants persisted in their commerce; from 1724 to 1728 their ships appeared in the Indies and won large profits; their wares sold in Europe and caused prices to drop in the Amsterdam market, so that the shares of the English and Dutch East India Companies fell temporarily. The imperial government of Vienna was in a difficult position; its general policy necessitated its being on good terms with the maritime powers, and the emperor's wish to secure his hereditary lands to his daughter

Maria Theresa made him respect the interests of his old allies. Through the mediation of France the maritime powers and the emperor agreed to preliminaries at Paris (May 31, 1727), by which the Belgian company was suspended for seven years. By the Vienna treaty of March 16, 1731, followed by the act of concurrence of February 20, 1732, it was stipulated that all commerce and navigation of the Austrian Netherlands in the East Indies should cease, while commerce with the West Indies remained prohibited by the treaty of Münster. Thus a dangerous rival was driven out of the market, and once more the southern Netherlands were economically subjected to the mercy of the north, which in this respect knew no mercy.

Other rivals could not be removed so easily. On the contrary, they began everywhere to crowd out the Dutch merchant. About 1740 it was no secret that Dutch commerce had long since passed its highest point. The Dutch merchant had fallen asleep upon his accumulated riches. He did not travel any more to distant lands or send his sons there, but sat in his office and relied on his old commercial relations. The sons lavished in luxury the money amassed by their fathers, engaged in pernicious speculations, and piled failure upon failure, so that the old Dutch credit was becoming a myth. The Dutch flag no longer waved over the fleetest sailers, the most capacious freighters; it was no longer carried by the most experienced seamen of the world in command of disciplined crews. English engineers and architects had to be called to help in the building of Dutch warships. It is not strange that as early as 1714 remedies were considered for improving the condition of Dutch commerce. Little came of them all, and, threatened by competition from all sides, commerce continued to languish. Of great significance was the state of the post-office, in which personal interest, favouritism, and family



government played an important part.<sup>1</sup> Postmasters' places were given to children or secretly leased or sold to the highest bidder for the benefit of the burgomaster or his family, while the appointed postmaster was intent only upon drawing as much as possible from the carriage of the mails. These were the consequences of the old system of intrusting the forwarding of letters to the municipal governments. For want of proper superintendence the secrecy of the mails was imperfectly preserved, the charges on letters became heavier, the regularity of the service left much to be desired. Universal was the demand for a better postal service, and finally salvation was seen only in the centralisation of the post-office, either in the hands of the States, or in those of the wished-for stadtholder. In 1725 under Slingelandt's influence there was an improvement in the collection of convoys and licenses, the States-General establishing a new list of them, by which they were reduced to about half the former amount. But this measure helped less than was expected. It was asserted that only one-third of the revenue actually reached the state treasury. More vigorous expedients were necessary, and the idea of making all the Dutch ports free gained ground. In Amsterdam, "formerly the centre of the world's commerce," everybody complained bitterly of its decline. A general reformation of the government was needed, a new birth of the republic. Who should undertake this, if not the prince of Orange? So it came about that many in commerce looked towards the "man of the future," although the leading commercial circles of Amsterdam and elsewhere saw slight hope in the elevation of a prince of the old family which, excepting Frederick Henry occasionally, had never done much for commerce, but seemed rather to have injured it by mili-

<sup>1</sup> Overvoorde, *Geschiedenis van het postwezen in Nederland*, p. 87.

tary and political aspirations. Among the prince's friends the conviction slowly penetrated that the free port system was the only remedy, especially when the Austrian Succession War, breaking out in 1740, threatened anew Dutch commerce with great dangers.

Naturally the two great companies suffered also. The blows, hitting the entire commerce of the republic, the causes, resulting in its decline, had a bad effect upon their condition. In the East India Company the government by families was no less active than elsewhere, and the consequence was not absent: directors and officials never enriched themselves more shamelessly at the expense of the company than in the first half of the eighteenth century. The shareholders at last perceived the deterioration in the lessening amount of their dividends, which in the war reached 25 per cent., in the first years after peace 40 per cent. again, but soon fell to 30 and 25 per cent., after 1737 to 15 and 12½ per cent. The "agonising state of India," says a document of about 1730, is to be ascribed to the conduct of the directors themselves, who intrust the government of India "to a lot of lazy know-nothings," put down able men of less noble birth, and give their friends the most lucrative places in order to fill their pockets quickly. The family domination of the aristocratic Van Outhoorn, of his son-in-law Van Hoorn, director-general, from 1701 governor-general, succeeded by his second father-in-law, the director-general Abraham van Riebeeck, had a bad reputation, and this dynasty of governors-general was too much for the directors, who prohibited thenceforth all relationship between the occupants of the two high dignities following one another. Riebeeck's successor, the active and honest Van Swoll, tried to improve matters, but neither he nor his energetic successor, Hendrik Zwaardecroon (1720-1725), succeeded in eradicating corruption, although they revived the Chinese tea trade and helped the company's



commerce by promoting on Java the cultivation of coffee brought over by Van Hoorn from the coast of Malabar.<sup>1</sup> Zwaardecroon resigned in discouragement. His insignificant successor, De Haan, was replaced in 1729 by Diederik Durven, who neglected the company's affairs for his own interests and was followed by the more reliable Van Cloon. After Van Cloon and his successor, Patras, who came to India a poor soldier and died rich, the ambitious and arbitrary Adriaan Valckenier appeared in 1737 as governor-general. He was to see the danger impending over the company from the Chinese, pouring into Java by thousands since the commencement of the century. His personal enmity towards some members of the council of India caused serious troubles.

With the extension of sugar cultivation on Java from about 1700 the number of Chinese there so increased—being estimated at about one hundred thousand in and around Batavia<sup>2</sup>—that placards were issued against this too great immigration. It became necessary to adopt measures against the vagabond Chinese sugar coolies in the neighbourhood of Batavia, bands of whom assailed the outposts and roamed plundering through the highlands. When the Chinese went outside of the company's forts or posts, they were obliged to show "letters of permission" or be sent back to China. These letters of course were speedily made a source of rich revenue to officials of the company. The fear of the Chinese flood grew so great among the small European population that in July, 1740, upon motion of the influential baron Van Imhoff, the personal enemy of Valckenier, the council of India resolved to arrest all "suspicious wandering"

<sup>1</sup> Pieter van den Broecke first saw in 1616 at Mocha in Arabia the "black beans, from which they make black water and drink it warm"; in the middle of the century coffee was first introduced into the republic (De Jonge, viii., p. cxxxiv.).

<sup>2</sup> Van Deventer, *Geschiedenis van Java*, ii., p. 103.

Chinamen in Batavia and the highlands and to "examine" them in fetters. The Chinese were exasperated by exaggerated reports of extortions, tortures, and plans for their destruction. At the end of September something leaked out of a proposed Chinese uprising, and Valckenier asserted he had received reliable reports concerning it. The council of India put little faith in them. Van Imhoff was commissioned with two other members to prevent the rebellion by "gentle means." Meanwhile the news of disturbances in the highlands became serious, so that Van Imhoff and the others went over to more vigorous action, and Batavia and environs were hastily placed in a condition to defend themselves. It appeared that the Chinese in the vicinity were in open revolt, were setting houses and plantations on fire, and were moving towards the city. A violent panic arose in Batavia, where the European population feared an uprising in the city. On October 9th, the governor-general put to the council the question, whether it was not time "to clear the city of the Chinese"; the council, at the instance of Van Imhoff again, resolved to adopt milder measures to hold them in check. But while the meeting was in session, the excitement among the European and native population over the report of a fire broke out into a bloody vengeance on the Chinese. Their houses were plundered and burned; they themselves, with wives and children, sick and old, were cruelly murdered in street and house; the people, including soldiers and sailors, were not to be calmed; even the prisons were invaded, and the murderous scenes were repeated there, so that the streets streamed with blood for a week. The number of the killed was estimated at ten thousand. It was affirmed that Valckenier himself had given the order for the "deplorable massacre," but he always denied it. Four days later the council of India resolved by means of premiums on severed heads "to animate the native



to destroy the turbulent Chinese outside of the city." Subsequent investigation has thrown no more light on the matter, and it is probable that no actual order was given, but that the anxiety and avarice of the European population, uncontrolled by the government, were the causes of the inhuman massacre. Serious dissensions followed in the council of India. On December 6th, Valckenier, after a violent scene, had the three most refractory members, Van Imhoff, De Haze, and Van Schinne, arrested, and a month later sent them to Europe as military prisoners. Meanwhile disturbances continued among the Chinese on Java. The Javanese population also began to rebel. It looked as if the authority of the company was coming to an end, and only with the utmost difficulty was some sort of order restored. Before this was effected, the report came from *patria* that Valckenier was recalled by the seventeen and replaced by Van Imhoff. Great was the astonishment and vexation of the seventeen, when they saw their appointee arrive in Europe a prisoner. He was immediately requested to accept the post of governor-general, and news of this was written to India. Valckenier, on his way to Europe, found at the Cape orders to put himself under arrest, and was sent back to Batavia to be tried. Van Imhoff used his sojourn in the fatherland to unfold a great scheme of reforms for India. He did this in his important *Considerations on the present state of the Dutch East India Company*, presented to the seventeen on November 21, 1741. In a series of sittings in the spring of 1742 they approved generally of his plans. A year later (May 28, 1743) the reformer arrived in Batavia, being deeply shocked by the decline since his departure, but confident of the possibility of a restoration. The company's charter in 1700 had been prolonged by the States-General for forty years on payment of three million guilders, and in December, 1742,

it was extended for twelve years more on payment of three per cent. of the dividends. A complete reformation of the company seemed possible only when the prince should take the management into his hands. Thus about 1740, eyes here were directed more and more towards the man who, it was hoped, would bring rescue, the representative of the family, which had repeatedly saved the republic.

The same causes made the West India Company suffer. Its dividends, from 5 per cent. about 1700, fell about 1720 to 4 per cent., about 1740 to 2 per cent., in the few years when dividends were paid; its shares dropped from par before 1723 to a half and below.<sup>1</sup> But this lamentable retrocession had less influence upon the general prosperity than was the case with the East India Company, because the business of the West India Company was far from being so extensive. Reforms appeared extremely desirable in the West Indies, and here also many people put their chief hope for the future in the prince.

About 1740 industry was in anything but a flourishing condition. The wholesale industry, developed in the latter part of the seventeenth century, had quickly diminished in consequence of the vigorous foreign competition. The high wages paid, the heavy taxes on many manufactures, the obstacles thrown up by the cities against every attempt to transfer industry to the country, were the main causes of the difficulty encountered by the Dutch manufacturers in their rivalry with foreign industry. There was further the constraint of the guilds, which impeded seriously the free growth of in-

<sup>1</sup> Netscher, *Geschiedenis van Essequibo, Demerary en Berbice*, p. 115, recounts that from 1735 to 1744 no payment took place. See Luzac, *Holland's rijkdom*, ii., p. 135. Generally excellent on the West Indies is: Hartsinck, *Beschrijving van Guiana* (Amsterdam, 1770).



dustry and occasioned abuses by its laxity, connived at by municipal governments for the personal profit of the regents. One market after another was closed to Dutch goods, either by the action of foreign governments, or by competition. The cloth mills and the still numerous small cloth workers had especially to suffer. The new calico printing establishments in Hamburg, Bremen, Brabant, and Flanders, the sugar refineries in the same places inflicted great injury upon the Dutch ones, which at the end of the seventeenth century were almost the only factories of the kind in the world. The makers of hats complained of French, English, and Brabant competition. The silk industry, formerly so flourishing, now declining, made loud complaints. With the coming in of gin as a popular beverage at the end of the seventeenth century the beer industry suffered very much. About 1750 there were not more than thirteen breweries in Amsterdam. Whenever remedies were recommended, they were chiefly protective duties, but naturally these were not agreeable to languishing commerce, which was calling for free trade, lower taxes, and free ports.

The fishery at this time was likewise in a state of decline. The whale fishery was continued during the war of the Spanish Succession, but later it was afflicted with the general troubles. The extension of the Greenland fishery to Davis Strait about 1720 afforded some compensation for the increasing French, English, Hamburg, and Danish competition. The number of ships sailing to Greenland, from 180 about 1717, dropped to below 100 around 1740, soon to less than 50, while the navigation to Davis Strait employed over 100 ships. The growing trade with the Eskimo settlements in Greenland led in 1738 to difficulties with Danes, who claimed a monopoly of this trade and even began to seize the Dutch vessels. The old contest over the *dominium maris* seemed about to be revived against Denmark in the polar seas, and the

old arguments were again employed. The same Netherlanders, whose merchants in opposition to Flemish rivals a short time before had voiced English ideas against the theory of the free sea, now saw their fishermen against the Danes appeal to the rights of freedom of motion in all seas and along all coasts, as they had done in the good days of De Groot and Graswinckel. The same opinions were championed or disputed, as happened to be convenient. In 1741 there was almost war with Denmark, but it was averted by yielding on the Dutch side, so that the trade in these regions was given up in return for a secret allowance of the fishery. The Iceland fishery of cod, haddock, turbot, plaice, etc., which was carried on by more than one hundred hookers about 1740, experienced prosperous days, though it demanded a lightening of the burdens imposed upon it. The herring fishery had more serious troubles, impaired as it was by high convoy taxes and the repeated attacks of French privateers during the succession war, while the coast fishery began to inflict injury upon the "great fishery" on the Scotch and English coast. The strength of the herring fleet in 1736 was estimated at two hundred and nineteen busses. In a century the business must have fallen off to about one-quarter or one-fifth of its former extent.

The increase of the poverty of the "sober tradesman" is remarked on all sides about 1740. A lack of progress is shown by the fact that in Amsterdam almost no house was to be had about 1730, while nearly nine hundred houses stood vacant in 1743. The terrible inundation of 1717, the repeated plagues among the cattle about 1725, the severe cold of the winter of 1740, famine, dearth of provisions, misery among the working population, the breaking of the dikes in December, 1740, and the spring of 1741, had many sad consequences, so that the hands of charity were full in helping the poor of the country



and the cities. Wherever the eye was turned the picture presented by Dutch commerce and industry about 1740 was one of decline and fall, another proof of the republic's sad condition. Is it strange that among merchants and manufacturers a growing feeling of discontent was directed against the existing government, and that in those circles also the call was ever louder for reform, which could only be expected from the prince? Serious study had been devoted by the prince to the interests of commerce and industry; he had considered favourably the question of free ports; he was ready to support industry by protective measures; with the reformers in the companies he had long stood in close personal relation. The only question was, under what circumstances he would be prepared to extend a hand to those desiring to place him in the breach. Of himself he would not come to that, but extraordinary circumstances might induce him to hasten to the help of the fatherland.





## CHAPTER IV.

### INTELLECTUAL LIFE IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

MATERIAL decline is usually coupled with intellectual decline, and is often a sequel of it. The rule holds good for this period of the republic's history. The fundamental cause of the material and political decay was the general laxness of mind then assailing the Dutch people. At the end of the preceding century a slackening of energy made its paralysing influence felt upon almost every part of popular life; in dress, manners and customs, literature and art the extent of this influence could be measured. It was not the least noticeable in religious and ecclesiastical matters, so important in the history of the Dutch population, devoted to religion and church. In a time of universal weakness dogmatic differences give place to a prevailing moderation. But the moderation of such men as Coornhert, De Groot, Visscher, Spieghel, Hooft, De Witt, Heydanus, and Spinoza, springing from independent consideration, is of a better nature than the weak moderation, proceeding from unsettled opinion, dread of dissension, longing for peace and rest, indifference to mooted questions, which characterised the Netherlands at the commencement of the eighteenth century. The zeal of an exiled French preacher, such as Jurieu of Rotterdam and Joncourt of The Hague, might kindle for a moment the old hatred between Voetians and Cocceians; Leenhof's book, *Hemel op Aarde* (1703), might raise a storm against Spinozism and Cartesianism;



Fruytiers' orthodox work, *Zions worstelingen* (1715), could bring down reproaches on him; the pen war against the Cocceian Professor Lampe of Utrecht might become violent about 1725; but among cultured Dutchmen the liberal ideas became more prevalent of the learned refugee Pierre Bayle, compiler of the still useful *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, the forerunner of the French *Encyclopédie*. The peaceful words of the old Voetian Mommers, whose *Eubulus of goede raad* (1738) contributed much to end the fraternal strife of a century in the reformed church, emphasised more the points of agreement than of difference; it was a funeral sermon not only on Cocceianism but also on his own Voetianism. The old war of dogmas gave way to a striving for toleration. The fiery Hattemists, mingling their doctrines with the ideas of Spinoza, found some adherents, but fell back before ecclesiastical hostility. The Herrnhuters, protected by Princess Maria Louisa and led by their founder, the Austrian Count Zinzendorf, were limited to a small circle, settled mainly at Zeist. With the increasing moderation the older sects ran into the general stream, which was gently led by intelligent, tolerant, worthy, but prolix middlemen like Professor Herman Venema of Franeker, the type of the theologian of those days, the founder of the scientific grammatical and historical exegesis as opposed to the old scholastic conception of study. Beside the study of the Hebrew and Greek languages for a better understanding of the Scriptures that of philosophy came up again. Some preachers ventured to take notice of the new, "subtle," philosophical principles and to apply them to theological questions, to the "mysteries of belief."

People began everywhere to perceive the danger of a sharp conflict over fine dogmatic differences. The influential Mennonite Johannes Stinstra <sup>1</sup> of Harlingen stood

<sup>1</sup> Sepp, *Johannes Stinstra en zijn tijd*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam,

in this matter with Venema. *In necessariis unitas, in non necessariis libertas, in omnibus prudentia et charitas*, the motto of moderation, cherished by Venema and his friends, became more and more the watchword among all Protestants. No more efforts were made to persuade the regents to put down "false doctrine," and only dreamers hoped to maintain the old Dort principles, which were given up for more tolerant ideas than the fathers had ever known. Such was the case among the cultivated residents of the cities, but the old differences were long talked of among the less educated classes in the country, and it was nothing unusual in the cabin of a canal-boat to hear Cocceian and Voetian peasants argue with one another or to hear tradesmen quote texts in support of the principles of Dordrecht or Rome, of Voetius or Cocceius. The placards against the Roman Catholics were no longer enforced. Men like Heinsius and Slingelandt did not think of endangering the alliance with the very Catholic Austria or the good understanding with France by opposing the Catholic religion. The old placards remained in existence, as rich sources of revenue to local authorities in city and country, but nowhere was it desired to execute them literally.<sup>1</sup> About St. John's day, 1734, a panic arose in the republic from the rumour that, in accordance with an ancient prediction, upon that day a general attack of the Catholics was to bring the whole country into their hands. People feared a new St. Bartholomew's night. It was asserted that the Orange party had spread the rumours in order to make use of the expected confusion for the elevation of the prince. The panic showed plainly that the Catholics were not trusted, and their attachment to the institutions of the fatherland was doubted. Reason for uneasiness among the adherents of the prevailing church was given

1865-66), the best work on the ecclesiastical ideas of these days.

<sup>1</sup> See Knuttel, *De toestand der Nederl. Katholieken*, ii., p. 67.



by the considerable number of Catholics in the country, where they formed one-third of the total population estimated at three millions of inhabitants, without complete liberty of worship, without share in the government. With interest the government took note of the violent dissensions in the Roman Catholic church at this time. The bitter strife resulted in a separation, in which the Old Catholics, persistently entitled Jansenists by the opposing party, could count upon the protection or favour of the government, dreading the interference of a foreign power, like the Roman curia, in the spiritual affairs of a large part of the population. The great majority of the Catholics, remaining faithful to the curia, was more than ever subject to the influence of the papal authority.

Extensive cultivation of science, literature, and art seems to be favoured by periods of rest, moderation, and toleration, by periods also of prosperity which, despite the decline of commerce and industry, long left its mark upon the social life of the Netherlands, thanks to good years earlier and to the accumulated wealth of the fathers. No such geniuses appear as Christiaan Huygens and Nicolaas Heinsius in science, as Vondel and Hooft in literature, as Rembrandt and Verhulst in art. No great discoveries or inventions are made; no striking poems or plays see the light; no splendid works of art are produced; but a high level of general development has been reached and maintained. Many scientists are enabled to devote themselves calmly to the careful investigation of what in the preceding century had been hinted at by genius or guessed by intuition. Willem Jacob van 's Gravesande,<sup>1</sup> ingenious student of the mathematical and natural sciences, enhances the fame of Leyden University by building up and introducing Newton's principles. Petrus van Musschenbroek, professor at

<sup>1</sup> Concerning these learned men see especially the travels of Uffenbach and Haller.

Utrecht and later at Leyden, combines chemistry and physics, and lays the foundations for the knowledge of magnetic and meteorological phenomena, for the study of electricity and the graphic presentation of observations. Herman Boerhaave, botanist and chemist, gives new life to these studies at Leyden and, "a new Hippocrates," he increased by his uncommon skill as a physician the renown of this university, which attracted many foreigners in his day (1709-1730). The Amsterdam anatomist Ruysch finds a worthy successor in Albinus, the Leyden professor. Leeuwenhoeck, who knew no foreign languages but was the great naturalist of his time, lives long enough (until 1723) to hand the torch of microscopical science to the gifted Petrus Lyonnet. The celebrated jurists, Schultingh, Vitriarius, Noodt, and Westenberg at Leyden University, the president of the court at The Hague Cornelis van Bijkershoek, hold aloft, about 1725, the reputation of Dutch jurists. Abraham Schultens, the first of a dynasty of scholars, carries to an unprecedented height the study of Oriental languages. Sigbertus Haverkamp, Tiberius Hemsterhuis, and Frans van Oudendorp continue the classical studies prosecuted before them by Johannes Perizonius and Petrus Burman. German scholars, like the theologian Lampe at Utrecht, the jurist Heineccius at Franeker, the anatomist Rau at Amsterdam, such French exiles as Basnage, Bayle, Jurieu, Leclerc, Barbeyras, and others raise the fame of science in the republic, which outside the circle of professors could show men like Gerard van Swieten, Boerhaave's distinguished pupil. He was long a physician and teacher at Leyden, where he could not become a professor on account of his Catholic faith, and was called to Vienna in 1745 by Maria Theresa. About 1725 Haller met at Amsterdam Fahrenheit, the Dantziger mechanic, who was making his thermometers and barometers. In Groningen lived the antiquarian burgomaster



Menso Alting, in Deventer the noted literary man Gijsbert Cuperus, in Amsterdam the philologist and archæologist Lambert ten Kate, forerunner of the Grimms. Thus the republic was still an important seat of learning, where more famous scholars were to be found than anywhere else in Europe. Leyden, swarming with bookshops and printers, with makers of instruments and mechanics, was the centre of scientific development, whither hundreds of foreigners betook themselves to study law, literature, medicine, and natural history. Among the German visiting students two are especially to be mentioned: the scientific traveller and bibliomaniac von Uffenbach and the Swiss physiologist Albrecht von Haller. The records of their travels are invaluable sources for the knowledge of science and art in Holland.

The scientific development of the republic bears more of an encyclopedic character than that of deep penetration into the secrets of nature. Magnificent collections of animals and plants, aquariums and herbariums, collections of rare shells, butterflies, insects, coins, engraved gems, medals, antiquities, manuscripts, books, autographs form the pride of the learned. Works sumptuous in printing and illustration, complete to the smallest details, awaken the admiration of foreign countries and still testify to the ability of the Dutch. The tendency of the Dutch scholars of the time was to accumulate, patiently and often without much judgment, everything that might be of use to science. This was notable in the department of historical research and writing. The Delft numismatist, Gerard van Loon, describes in an endless series the thousands of Dutch historical medals with inimitable accuracy, gives an excellent manual of numismatics, gathers materials on kirmisses and on the ancient history of Holland. First of all is the simple Amsterdam clerk Jan Wagenaar, the author of the *Vaderlandsche Historie* in twenty-one volumes, a compilation

of everything concerning the history of the fatherland to be learned from books and archives, a gigantic work that is still of value. Nowhere was there a greater interest in scientific matters than in the republic; every wealthy man possessed a library or collection; and for every publication there were interested buyers. Voluminous works were not only written and bought, but also zealously read. Nowhere appeared so many criticisms of what was brought to light in the learned world. Pierre Bayle, the encyclopedic genius settling in 1681 at Rotterdam, founded there the *Nouvelles de la république des lettres*, soon followed by the *Bibliothèque universelle* of the Amsterdam refugee Jean Leclerc, which lived on until 1727 as the great European critical journal in literary affairs. Literature at this time did not reach a great height.<sup>1</sup> The prolix dramatist Alewijn could boast of the success of his comedies; he was surpassed by Pieter Langendijk, a master in the very popular farces. The verses of the "feminine Vondel," Elisabeth Hoofman, of her older contemporary Catharina Lescailje, of Lucas Schermer, pompous singer of the "bravery of the allies" in the war of the Spanish Succession, of the affected poet of rural life Huibert Poot, of the learned Balthasar Huydecoper are but a weak afterglow of the brilliant light shed by Vondel and his contemporaries. Not to be compared with the men of the preceding period are the lauded poet Jacob Zeeus, and Lucas Rotgans, who honoured *William the Third* in a long allegorical epic poem and stood far below Brederoo in his flat *Boerekermis*. Inferior also are Arnold Hoogvliet, who composed the poem *Abraham de aartsvader* in twelve pious but wearisome "books," his numerous imitators, and the critic of the period—Sybrand Feitama. They were followed by a long series of rhymesters, who took for their motto—"sweat buys glory" or "art is obtained by work."

<sup>1</sup> See Jonckbloet, *Gesch. der Nederl. Letterkunde*, vol. v.



The Rotterdam official Dirk Smits, the Leyden "phenix" Jan de Kruyff, the Amsterdam "hero of art" Lucas Pater, the champion of "clearness and purity of language" Bernardus Bosch, the "glory of his race" Frans de Haes, the worthy Lucas Trip of Groningen—they are all more devoted to the form than to the substance of poetry. In the circles of the regents, who acted as Mæcenases to the indigent poetical band, as well as among the opulent citizens the help of the poets was called in upon every occasion. Many "bread poets" were to be found, who made verses by the yard and sold them in their shops like "cakes at the bakery." Their "weaving of rhymes" flourished as the newest branch of trade and industry. The "incomparable" Jan van Gijzen of Amsterdam and the "matchless" Pieter van Wijnbeek of Leyden were the classical types.

"Alas! so is poetry true  
Scourged, pinched black and blue,"

says the poet Zeeus, speaking of the art "seized by the hair at weddings or anniversaries." What was an exception in the seventeenth century now became the rule, and verses streamed over the republic, verses often irreproachable in rhyme and measure but empty of contents and lacking in poetry and taste. At the end of this period a reaction began and was represented by the Frisian nobleman, Willem van Haren, who surpassed others in real poetical feeling more in his lyrics than in his epic poem—*De gevallen van Friso* (1741). He and his younger brother Onno Zwier at the stadtholder's court turned attention from the classic French to the literature of the fatherland. But the court was only slightly touched by this reaction. William IV. himself, brought up according to the ideas of the French and English aristocracy of the eighteenth century, had little sympathy for native poetical productions. It was much

that he wrote good Dutch in his numberless letters. Thus he set an excellent example to the many of high rank, who corrupted the purity of their language by the excessive use of foreign words. The old evil, that is noted in the Middle Ages under the influence of the French romantic literature, that is promoted by the princely courts in the Hainaut and Burgundian time, that in the seventeenth century invades further with the numerous French officers and the prevalence of French manners and of admiration for the French language and literature, had increased no less seriously with the coming of the refugees. One was not considered educated, if he could not express himself easily in French. French schools, springing up like mushrooms wherever poor refugees settled, French tutors and valets, barbers and tailors, maids and dressmakers helped to bring the Dutch language into contempt. From the society of The Hague the Frenchifying reached the commercial world of Amsterdam, from there the families of the regents and of the citizens, who imitated the example of the aristocrats. Fortunately about 1730 a vigorous reaction against this degeneration of the language went out from the literary men, which brought the evil to a stand, though it could not be entirely removed.

In art and music this period was not of great importance. Originality of invention and execution is lost. It is the golden time of the academical books of instruction of Hoogstraten and Lairese, the time when Houbraken compiles his biographical work the *Groote Schouburgh* (1718),<sup>1</sup> the flourishing period of art erudition and strict schools of art, of technical perfection and artistic poverty. The honoured master of the period was the aged Lairese; though blind during twenty years, he "put the

<sup>1</sup> See Hofstede de Groot, *Quellenstudien zur holländischen Kunstgeschichte* (Haag, 1893); De la Barre de Beaumarchais, *Le Hollandois* (Frankf., 1738), p. 177.



palette into the hands" of many young painters at Amsterdam until his death in 1711; his *Groot Schilderboek* and his *Grondlegginge der Teekenkonst* went through repeated editions; his academic conception of art ruled over almost the entire eighteenth century. His pupil Houbraken exercised influence by the art theories that he wove into his biographies of Dutch painters. Gerard Hoet of Utrecht wrote a popular *Ontsloten deure der Teekenkonst*. Arnold Boonen (died 1729), pupil of Godfried Schalcken, himself the master of Quinkhart, Troost, and Philip van Dijk, is the last of the painters of regent pieces, and Peter the Great, the first king of Prussia, and Marlborough sat to him. He and his contemporary, Adriaan van der Werff (died 1722), were the most popular painters of their day and acquired wealth by their never-resting brushes. Jan van Huchtenburgh (died 1733) painted cavalry combats for Prince Eugene and other noblemen. Willem van Mieris (died 1747) and his son Frans, the younger, continued the traditions of the Leyden school of fine painting and equalled Van der Werff in porcelainlike colouring. Jan van Huysum (died 1749) painted flowers in an elegant manner, and Rachel Ruysch worked no less skilfully. Miniature painting on glass and porcelain was much in vogue even among painters of repute. But all these young painters belong to the race of the decadents, worshipping form instead of inspiration; they are talented but not masters of art. There had never been more students of art than in this period. It became the fashion for any one aspiring to culture to study the technic of poetry or of one or more of the fine arts. The result was a widely diffused knowledge, a certain interest in art and science. Small talents were everywhere displayed in small fields of activity. Amateur theatricals and literary and art societies flourished in all the cities; the chambers of rhetoricians in the villages boasted of their prize contests; houses over-

flowed with the art products of the inmates or their friends. Every mansion of any importance had its library or art collection. These collections often changed owners by sale or inheritance; the Leyden book auctions and the Amsterdam sales of antiquities were known over all Europe. It was no great secret that fraud had crept into these affairs. Art dealers and brokers stood in bad repute. Fine frames served to pass off copies for originals; marks and names of artists were shamelessly forged, so that an ordinary work might be sold for a masterpiece. Many a noted collection proved finally to be of little artistic value, and the country acquired a bad name as a market for paintings and antiquities. The presence of books and works of art in the houses of regents, merchants, and men of property could not fail to exercise a civilising influence. Though often superficial, this culture was quite general among the citizen class. But it did not descend to the lower ranks. Small citizens and poor people had little or no share in it. Badly educated, scarcely knowing how to read and write, in their work adhering to old fashions, without desire for improvement or development, they grew up in ignorance, despised and rejected by the well to do, at most treated and viewed with a certain compassion, but not admitted to community in the higher things of life. In the church alone, participating in the intellectual life of the nation, showing interest only in ecclesiastical matters, the lowest class of the people was still separated from the rich by a cleft that was becoming wider rather than smaller in the eighteenth century. The founding of schools for the poor about 1730<sup>1</sup> showed that there was some thought of making them share in the advantages of development. The time was still far away, when there was to be vigorous activity in this direction.

<sup>1</sup> Van Effen, *Holl. Spectator*, vii., p. 135.





## CHAPTER V

### REGENTS AND CITIZENS ABOUT 1740

THE republic of the United Netherlands was at this time more than ever an aristocratically governed state, in which two classes were foremost, the patrician regents and the prosperous citizens. There was scarcely any consideration more of the nobles as a separate rank. What remained of the old nobility began to assume the character of a country nobility, of limited means, rude in manners, old-fashioned in dress and opinions, received with distinction only at the stadtholder's court, feeling at home only there, and appointed there to the old court offices—an honourable survival of vanished greatness. Of the poor tradesman also it may be said that he was of slight importance in the life of the republic. The "fellow" had simply to obey and to take to heart the fatherly admonitions of the ruling patrician. So unregarded was he in the sources that it would be difficult to sketch his daily life, bound down to the regulations of the guilds, with no change but his gin and his pipe of tobacco smoked over the lower door, ending his drudgery in the poor house or as an object of church charity. More fortunate might be esteemed the "peaceful" countryman, sung by the poets, "who would not have given up his happy lot, however obscure, for a king's crown." With the absence of all rumour of war the security of the country was not disturbed; floods and cattle plagues might temporarily darken the prospects; extortions of

bailiffs and sheriffs might make life hard; seigneurial taxes and tithes might now and then recall the dependence upon the powerful lord of the land, in general the fate of the "milkman" and the "turf cutter" was not to be pitied. The poetically sentimental praise of the "Batavian Arcadia" exaggerated the idyl of rustic life in accordance with the French literary fashion; the possibility of doing this proves that the reality was not in too sharp contradiction to such presentations. Experience of life made good to the countryman what he lacked in mental development owing to defective education. Even the rudeness of the peasant kirmess in these days was somewhat less than the paintings of Brouwer and Ostade had depicted, perhaps in consequence of the presence in the country of many city people in numerous resorts and villas. Another type of the seventeenth-century Netherlander, the seaman, was becoming lost with the decay of navigation. Nobody thought now of portraying the Hollander as the rough, round, horny-handed sea dog, but rather as the prosperous "seller of cheeses," with a Gouda pipe in his mouth and hands in his pockets, calmly calculating or enjoying his profits. The times were past, when every citizen family had at least one member roaming the sea, and naturally this change had a great influence on the national characteristics. The Hollander was still a shrewd merchant, a slow thinker, a peaceful citizen, but the virtue of quiet self-restraint, simplicity of life and language, and vigorous energy were visibly declining to the detriment of land and people.

Far above tradesman, peasant, and seaman was raised the proud regent of the eighteenth century, now regarding himself as the equal of those Venetian and Florentine noblemen of the later Middle Ages, whose splendour had dazzled the world. He considered himself placed by God's grace in the legitimate possession of the supreme



power in the republic. There was to be no interference of the prince of Orange, that "ambitious official," no participation in the government of the citizen, whom "divine and human law" had put under his authority. To God, to his conscience, to his own class alone was the regent responsible for his acts, and this haughty feeling was manifested in his outward appearance. His dress, in which the sober black gowns edged with fur of earlier days had given place to coloured coats, velvet breeches, lace ruffs, and sword at side; his proud bearing with head thrown back to look down upon the citizen; his newly painted or embroidered coat of arms to distinguish his family above others; his genealogy carefully compiled by experts and eradicating all traces of vulgar origin; his measured way of speaking rendered more genteel by the excessive use of French words—all this elevated him high above the common multitude. His house was a palace recognisable from without by its freestone or marble gables and steps, its windows and doors in the best French style of Louis XIV. and Louis XV., no longer having the stiff old Dutch gables with steps. Within the magnificence had become no less. The rooms were filled with costly inlaid tables and cabinets, with elegant chairs, with Japanese and Chinese pottery, with treasures of Venetian glass, with the fashionable pastel pictures and fine miniatures, with painted or stuccoed ceilings representing allegorical subjects appropriate to the use of the apartment, with rich hangings on the walls, with expensive Persian or Turkish carpets on the floors, with precious possessions in silver and porcelain transmitted from generation to generation and treasured with care and love. Such was the patrician house of the eighteenth century. Its grandeur was completed by a garden carefully arranged according to Le Nôtre's directions with fish ponds and parterres and much sunlight, not intercepted by the shade of trees,

with fantastically shorn hedges and thickets, with gigantic vases and artful fountains, with grottoes and mosaics, coloured by the bright bloom of the fashionable hyacinth, the tulip and narcissus, and roses and lilies cultivated in all sorts of singular forms. Furthermore there was the country seat on the Amstel, Vecht, or some smaller canal, the Dutch Tempe of those days, described by Van Lennep in his *Ferdinand Huyck*. The Vecht district was full of sumptuous villas with monumental gates, with iron fences artistically forged, with broad lanes of beeches, elms, or lindens, adorned with long rows of orange trees, with freestone steps before the princely mansion, with extensive parks containing shaded alleys and bowers penetrated by no ray of the sun, with arbours of fragrant honeysuckle, with trees cut in curious shapes, theatres of living verdure, artful grottoes, mosaics of shells and stones, endless labyrinths, mysterious waterworks, hotbeds of fine fruits and flowers, gilt and marble garden statues, wonderful effects of light and colour, and grand distant views. Many a smaller city saw some country places of this kind not too far from its gates.

Life was simpler in the smaller country dwellings to be found in the vicinity of every city of importance. A few sleeping rooms with beds and chairs, tables and mirrors of slight value, the walls covered with calico or paper, a larger dining-room, a small kitchen, and a deep cellar—that was the whole house. A plain flower garden, orchards, and kitchen gardens, a wide prospect, canals abounding in fish, chickens, and pigeons to the heart's content, finished the rustic resort of the common citizen. More modest purses had to be content with the ever increasing tea houses and gardens, where on summer evenings the busy city man smoked his pipe peacefully in the midst of his family and amused himself by looking at the passing pedestrians, post coaches, or canal boats.



Tranquil rest, the rest of the independent gentleman, the merchant, the manufacturer, living upon the interest of the Dutch municipal loans and government obligations—that is the general character of Holland's city society in these days. The whole life indicates a high degree of prosperity and speaks of satisfaction with what has been attained, of peaceful pleasures, of a desire to keep one's possessions without any great inclination to exert one's self further. It is a quiet life on all sides, easily continued in such a country as the republic "crammed with treasures," where the ownership of sixty to seventy thousand guilders was estimated as a "moderate capital." The daily life in the city presents in general the same picture as that in the country. Here also the impression is given of prevailing luxury and peaceful content in contrast with the simple worth and energetic activity of the fathers. The old Dutch character gave place slowly to the weak feeling of a citizen of the world, borrowing manners and customs from French, English, and less from the still backward German neighbours. The close political relation with England in William III.'s time had brought English clothes, food, drink, furniture, dances into vogue, but the French fashion, diffused everywhere by the numerous French refugees, had kept the upper hand. The relations between man and woman, both in and out of marriage, had experienced the consequences. What in the seventeenth century had belonged to the exceptions, became more and more customary in this "enlightened century"; gallantry in the bad sense of that time did not remain confined to some high circles, but reached into the families of the common citizens; adultery and unlawful attachments were quite frequent. The tone in the assemblies was often anything but edifying, and the *société galante* counted admirers and imitators among young and old in this century. From The Hague and Amsterdam the

assemblies found their way to the smaller cities of Holland and then to the other provinces. They were held in the afternoon from October to May and brought together many young gentlemen and coquettish ladies. Showy pedants, dressed in knee-breeches with white stockings, coats with high waists and short skirts, vests embroidered in gold and silver, with lace ruffs on the sleeves and gold buttons, diamonds in the cravats, with pomaded and powdered hair and irreproachable wig and queue, the face plastered with patches, costly rings on the fingers, beautifully engraved gold knobs on the canes which they foppishly twirled in delicately gloved hands, with silver buckles on the shoes, muffs on the hands, and lace handkerchiefs, with ridiculously small hats folded under the arm and a little sword at the side, chattered airily there and were proud of their finely painted complexion and of their bows and grimaces practised before the mirror. Not otherwise did the ladies in their gigantic hooped skirts, farthingales, and panniers, painted also red and white, stuck with patches "like currant cake," as Rotgans says, with lace, gold, silver, and diamonds on breast, fingers, and ears, with towering coiffures on powdered heads, in dresses cut uncommonly low, jabbering in a mixed French and Dutch about the latest horse-races, about the French novels just published, whose dubious character did not prevent their perusal, about scandalous and other news of the day, about noted actors and actresses. After this fashionable conversation, full of exaggerated compliments to the people of superior rank, with tea and coffee for refreshments, followed card-games, ombre, quadrille, later whist, with all their temptation to gambling, not a little animated by excessive indulgence in wine, until the party broke up about the time of the evening meal. At the end of the winter the company usually had a fine banquet with a ball or a picnic, each person contributing to what was needed.



The watchman did not end the festivities with his warning that the clock had struck "ten" and everybody must look after his "fire and candle." A merry night was often the conclusion of the meeting. Then the ladies and gentlemen finally went home, preceded by a servant with a lantern to pick out the best way along the dark streets. Not without danger was this darkness over the badly lighted canals and shaky bridges in cities and villages, especially after such parties. Many a life was lost by a false step. Mention is sometimes made of criminal attacks that claimed victims, and the case is remembered of the young patrician of Hoorn, who went to Edam to visit his beloved and, owing to the intentional misplacement of a lantern, fell into the water and was drowned.<sup>1</sup>

The education of the young sons of the regents was patterned entirely after the French model. French schools, established by poor refugees in great number, came at once into favour. French governesses and the French tutor, the *mossieu*, became the teachers of aristocratic youth. What had begun in the seventeenth century was now rapidly developed. The speaking, reading, and writing of Dutch dropped out of use more and more in the circles of the regents, and although they could do little better than murder the French language, it was considered rude and uncultivated to employ in common intercourse the language of maids and servants. A journey to Paris was the last finish of a young man's education. Though the young woman was usually deprived of this advantage, she was accustomed to the manners of French society. She learned to stammer out French, to rattle off exaggerated French compliments, to scribble French letters, in any case to mix her Dutch with French words and sentences. This Gallicising assailed the national character and threatened it with ruin from above

<sup>1</sup> Fruin, *Verspreide Geschriften*, vii., p. 10.

downwards. The numerous servants carried some of the habits of the upper classes into the lower ones; the universal wish to ape one's betters worked in the same direction. Fortunately the example of the higher classes was followed only with Dutch slowness. The healthy understanding, the practical and serious conception of life, the rather rough but in general unspoiled tone of social intercourse long continued to characterise the ordinary Dutch citizen. Moderation in eating and drinking was found oftener in these circles than among the more aristocratic people, whose doughty feats at table over the bottle did not fall behind those of their forefathers. The table was overloaded also at simple birthday celebrations. There meats and pasties followed one another in an endless series, and no less plentiful were vegetables and fruits, among which the potato appeared in the middle of the century,<sup>1</sup> then healths were drunk in prose or poetry. Grace before and thanks after the meal did not prevent excessive indulgence, an extra glass preceding the separation of the men and women, the former taking a little air and returning to more wine and beer and a long pipe, the latter playing cards and drinking tea. At the evening meal the glass went round merrily again, the conversation grew more lively and ended in a kissing party, varied by ditties from the duodecimo song-book that everybody had in his pocket, putting happy and unhappy love to old and new melodies. No less extravagant were often the christening banquets and even the funeral feasts, whose excessive luxury awakened remonstrance. In the country also abundant repasts were prepared in the house of the dead, so that the mournful ceremony ended in mad merriment and sport.

<sup>1</sup> Vegelin van Claerbergen planted it in 1736 at his Frisian country place, whence it was brought to the garden of Princess Maria Louisa, who set the vegetable on December 13, 1742, as a great rarity, before her son, the prince, and his wife.



Noise and tumult made all solemnity disappear, and the guests, disputing and reeling, left the house late at night, or the pallbearers betook themselves to the nearest tavern to drink together "to the health of the dead man." Evidently the old popular sin, excessive drinking, was still one of the most notable characteristics of the Netherlander. In this respect both men and women distinguished themselves, and the evil was strong in the upper and lower classes. The substitution of French and Spanish brandy in place of the less harmful beer and the increasing use of gin exerted an unfavourable influence. Numberless kinds of wine, among which Rhenish wine began seriously to compete with the French product, found many worshippers, whose attachment to the bottle was not less than of old. The beautiful wine-glasses were not merely ornaments of the cabinet, but could boast of much practical use. The drinking mottoes engraved upon them testified to the countless pretexts for proposing healths at social dinners and public ceremonies; the menus preserved to us of official banquets of magistrates, dike and polder corporations, directors of charitable institutions, remind us, as well as the portraits of this time, of the intemperance in eating and drinking that characterised the Dutch in the opinion of their neighbours in the eighteenth no less than in the seventeenth century. This all resulted from the high standard of living, which had driven out simplicity and economy. The time of hard work and incessant accumulation had been followed by the time of enjoyment, of living and letting live. It was the question whether circumstances would long allow this careless enjoyment, this domestic still life. The answer to this question depended not least upon the course of political events in Europe, which might have a decisive influence on the condition of commerce, the source of all this wealth and prosperity.



## CHAPTER VI

### AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION WAR

A DOCUMENT of 1736 shows how some European statesmen estimated the importance of the republic. "The situation of the republic between Germany and France, its commerce, connection with England, strength, prudence, and impartiality in the last troubles attract for it the consideration and confidence of all the powers."<sup>1</sup> But the writer was little acquainted with the republic's real condition and was misled by outward appearances. Seven years later the judgment of Carteret, the English minister, was rightly otherwise: "There is no longer any government in the republic, and people know it," and William IV. repeated what Slingelandt had said before him: "If God does not preserve the fatherland in a wonderful way, its fall is near and unavoidable." The weak hand of the new council pensionary, Anthony van der Heim, was not fitted to avert this fall. After his death it could be said that he had quitted himself as a faithful and obedient servant of the States and nothing more. The republic confined itself at first to coöperation in efforts to establish general peace. The assent of the maritime powers was desired to the agreement between France and the emperor concerning Lorraine, whose duke, married to the emperor's daughter, Maria Theresa, was to exchange his territory for Tuscany, where the house of Medici was dying out, while

<sup>1</sup> *Report of my Journey to Italy*, p. 81.



Lorraine was to go to the ex-king of Poland, Stanislaus Leczynski, who in turn renounced the Polish crown to the elector of Saxony. But they refused to interfere, and in the spring of 1737 the exchanges were accomplished with the aid of Spain and its Italian secundo-genitures. France and Austria concluded the treaty of Vienna (November, 1738), by which the former recognised the succession of Maria Theresa in the Hapsburg territories—a great consolation to the old emperor, the chief aim of whose policy was the confirmation of this succession.

Threatening was the relation of the maritime powers to Spain, which during years, in its endeavours to suppress English and Dutch smuggling into its West Indian possessions, had molested legitimate commerce with its war-ships and in 1737 withdrew the permission granted by the treaty of 1713 for an English vessel to visit the Spanish ports of the South Sea annually. Dutch ships were seized by the Spaniards in the West Indies. The dissensions became so serious that a strong English fleet of fifty ships sailed in 1738 to the Mediterranean Sea to uphold English interests. The States limited themselves to protests at Madrid. Finally Spain promised an indemnity to England, but demanded of the English Assiento company a large sum as duties upon the importation of negroes. This new demand angered England and led in October, 1739, to a war between the two powers, in which the States immediately declared neutrality. In 1740 some preparations were made on land and sea. It was resolved to add 11,500 men to the army and some ships to the navy. Meanwhile the danger of a general war became more serious in consequence of the death of the emperor, Charles VI., in October, 1740. He had long sought to assure the succession in his hereditary lands to his daughter by securing from the chief kingdoms the recognition of his Pragmatic Sanction drawn up for that purpose. He had succeeded

with England, the States, Spain, France, Saxony, Poland, Prussia, and a number of the smaller German states. When he was dead, the kings of France and Spain and several German princes wanted to withdraw their assent under all sorts of pretexts. Bavaria placed itself at the head of Maria Theresa's enemies in the German empire, appealing to the will of Emperor Ferdinand I., which bestowed the crown on his "lawful," *i. e.*, as was asserted, male heir, that the elector Charles Albert of Bavaria claimed to be. Maria Theresa, who had made her husband Francis of Lorraine, now grand duke of Tuscany, co-regent, called for the support of her father's old allies, the maritime powers, which had readily recognised her but were not so ready to aid her with arms. Neither Great Britain, at war with Spain and distrusting France, nor the republic, ever longing for peace, was inclined to take her side openly. The sudden invasion by Frederick II. of Prussia into Silesia, from which he drove the Austrians in 1741, caused the allies only to make representations. At one time the king of Spain, as heir of the Spanish Hapsburgs, the king of Sardinia pretending to Milan, the king of Poland, as elector of Saxony and heir of Emperor Leopold, began to let their claims be heard. Notwithstanding the peaceful disposition of the old Fleury and the young Louis XV., France seemed willing to take advantage of the circumstances and to help break up the venerable Hapsburg monarchy. The influential duke de Belle-Isle, anxious to play the part of Richelieu, urged the government to war and concluded in May, 1741, at Nymphenburg a treaty with Bavaria and Spain, soon also with Saxony-Poland and Sardinia, and finally an agreement with Prussia. Two French armies of forty thousand men penetrated in the summer into Germany, where de Belle-Isle, now a marshal of France, advanced with Bavarian and Saxon help to Prague and Linz and threatened the heart of the Austrian



hereditary states. Charles Albert's election as emperor in January, 1742, appeared to seal the fall of the Hapsburg monarchy.

These events brought the maritime powers into great embarrassment. George II. pressed the States to join in supporting the brave queen of Hungary. But they were little disposed to engage in the war, and the two maritime powers at first confined themselves to negotiating at Vienna and Berlin for the restoration of peace between Prussia and Austria. The States, meanwhile, increased their army by 11,000, afterwards by 20,000 more men. They granted, like England, a considerable subsidy to the queen assailed on all sides. The English mediation relieved her of her Sardinian foe, then in July, 1742, of the Prussian enemy, to whom she had to cede Silesia. Maria Theresa succeeded also in conquering Bohemia and in subjecting Bavaria. France was alarmed at the preparations of the States. The French ambassador, de Fénélon, did his best to keep the different provinces from consenting to war measures, while the Austrian envoy, Baron Reischach, urged execution of the treaties. The latter was sustained by an extraordinary envoy from London, Lord Stair, with the ordinary ambassador Trevor, now that the war party in England had forced the peaceful Walpole out of the government (February, 1742). An English army, composed of Danish and Hessian mercenaries and sent to the Flemish garrisons, showed that England desired to exchange neutrality for vigorous action in favour of the queen. On the other side de Fénélon, in the name of France, offered to the States neutrality, an arrangement concerning the Austrian Netherlands, and the possession of Dunkirk until the end of the war. The Dutch ambassador at Paris, Abraham van Hoey, recommended this proposal at The Hague.<sup>1</sup> But could the designs of France be trusted?

<sup>1</sup> De Jonge, *Geschiedenis van de diplomatie gedurende den*

The question with many was whether help was actually pledged to Maria Theresa. The answer given by a committee of the Estates of Holland in November, 1742, was that the queen ought to be aided, now that she appealed to the treaty of 1732; money was not sufficient, because the treaty spoke of five thousand men or more; in any event the money promised should be raised, and postponement must not be sought, as had been done in all the provinces except Holland and Zealand. The affair began to be serious. Pamphlets on both sides increased the agitation. Followers of the prince and adherents of the States opposed one another, the former insisting upon assistance to the queen in coöperation with England, the latter upon favouring France. The augmentation of the army naturally brought up again the old matter of the prince's promotion. The States-General promoted him from colonel to lieutenant-general, but this was too little for the captain-general of three provinces; he answered that he could take no office, which did not correspond with his dignity. Stadtholder of three provinces and Drenthe, by inheritance prince of Nassau-Dillenburg and Nassau-Siegen, consequently an imperial prince of importance, the prince of Orange and Nassau considered himself too high to occupy a subordinate office in the Dutch army, where his forefathers had taken the first rank. He remained in communication with friends in the different provinces, watching for an opportunity to win the place of those ancestors, when called by the regents themselves. But not for a moment did he think of hastening the course of affairs by vigorous action on his part; the confused state of the republic did not entice him to relinquish the character of a "forgotten citizen." At the end of 1742 England was allied with Prussia and Russia; and Saxony-Poland and the republic

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*Oostenrijkschen Successie-oorlog* (Leiden, 1852), p. 62. He drew materials especially from the papers of Van der Heim.



were invited to join this alliance. Finally (June 22d) the majority of the States-General recognised the engagement to support the queen with twenty thousand men, whom she might use anywhere except in Italy, and who were placed under command of Count Maurice of Nassau-Ouwerkerk, great-grandson of Prince Maurice.

So the republic, which thus far had done nothing for the queen, was to enter into the war in conjunction with England, whose king, George II., was to go to Germany at the head of an army. The vexation of France was answered by pointing out the necessity of observing the treaties. The English army advanced to the Main, united there with the imperial troops as the "Pragmatic" army, and on June 27th defeated the French at Dettingen. Not until August did the Dutch troops move from Arnhem to the Main, but they accomplished little and soon took up winter quarters in the frontier fortresses of Hainaut and Flanders, assurance being given to the French court that the States did not think of a war with France. This did not prevent de Fénélon from leaving The Hague, although his post was temporarily filled by the abbé de la Ville. New difficulty arose from the more warlike attitude of France. After Fleury's death the war party gained great influence; a circle of courtiers and mistresses, supported by all the French nobility, urged war, and its leader was to be the brilliant young courtier, Count Maurice de Saxe, bastard of Augustus II. of Saxony and Poland and marshal of France. In spring something leaked out of French plans for an invasion of England by Charles Edward, the Stuart pretender. By virtue of old treaties the English government requested help from the States, which sent six thousand men over the North Sea before a storm had driven back the French landing fleet. France's declaration of war upon England followed in March. England now demanded the aid of twenty war-

ships, and eight of them were made ready in all haste and, under command of the lieutenant-admiral, Hendrik Grave, aged seventy-two years, joined the English fleet in August. The squadron's condition was anything but brilliant, and the aged commander's conduct was so weak that his subordinates were ashamed and the English government complained. Half of the squadron under the inefficient admiral returned home in the following spring, while the other half, commanded by the vice-admiral 'T Hooft, operated longer with the English fleet with little better result. The decay of sea power could not more plainly appear than by this wretched expedition, which showed how right Chesterfield was in remarking that "all their Admiralties together cannot fit out another ship in the world" and that "arguments have little weight in the present anarchy."<sup>1</sup>

It looked as if the army would soon have an opportunity to show its capacity. The French armies were preparing to attack the Austrian Netherlands, and de Fénélon, a lieutenant-general of those troops, came to The Hague to take leave of the States-General, where he had represented French interests during nineteen years. The States resolved upon an extraordinary embassy to France, and the commission was given to Unico Willem, count of Wassenaer-Twickel. The purpose was to learn on what terms peace might be restored. Baron van Boetselaer had already departed for England with the same object. While both negotiated without much success, the French forces captured one barrier fortress after another. The weak "Pragmatic" army, including Dutch troops under General Smissaert, did not venture to leave its quarters at Oudenarde owing to dissensions between the leaders. Both the army and the diplomacy of the republic showed themselves as little equal to their task as the navy. The attitude of the States-General was

<sup>1</sup> Jorissen, *Chesterfield*, in *Historische Studiën*, p. 141.



weak, for they declined France's repeated offer of neutrality, but did not dare openly to declare war, as Trevor requested in the name of England, and they would not recognise the emperor in accordance with the desires of Prussia and Bavaria. More troops were raised after Frederick II.'s new attack, this time upon Bohemia. In the summer of 1744 the "Pragmatic" army, finally increased to eighty thousand men, moved from Oudenarde under the duke of Arenberg and forced the French back over their frontiers. The States were at last persuaded in March, 1745, to join in the alliance of Warsaw between Saxony, England, and Austria for the maintenance of peace in Europe and of the Pragmatic Sanction. The death of the emperor, Charles VII., seemed to offer a chance of peace, when his son and successor consented to a treaty, by which he received back his electorate and recognised the Pragmatic Sanction. In August the election of the Hungarian queen's husband as emperor under the name of Francis I. improved the prospect, at least in Germany, where the second Silesian war was concluded before the end of the year by the peace of Dresden. Affairs were less favourable to the allies in the southern Netherlands, where Maurice de Saxe had taken command of the French armies. The allies, whose army was nominally commanded by the incapable duke of Cumberland with the count of Königseck as the real leader, were defeated by the French marshal at Fontenoy (May 11th), partly in consequence of the shameful flight of some of the Dutch cavalry. The weak Dutch force under the prince of Waldeck could put little weight in the scales. Brabant and Flanders fell into the hands of the French; the chief cities of Brabant alone held out. The Pretender's invasion of Scotland occasioned a new reduction of the allied armies, and Dutch troops helped frustrate this invasion. The approach of the French to the Dutch frontiers and the heavy losses of commerce by the war

made the States ardently desire a resumption of peace negotiations. Hesitatingly Van der Heim, forming with some Dutch lords a sort of secret committee or conclave for foreign affairs, resolved upon a private embassy to Paris. Late in November Colonel De Larrey, a friend of the council pensionary, went secretly to Paris to settle with the marquis d'Argenson, there in charge of foreign affairs, the terms of peace. Cleverly were these terms indicated, for the peace concluded three years later deviated little from them, but they found no acceptance at this time. After Larrey had returned in January without having accomplished his mission, the conclave determined on February 1, 1746, to send Wassenaer again to Paris.

It was high time, because Maurice de Saxe had laid siege to Brussels notwithstanding the presence of Dutch troops at Antwerp under the prince of Waldeck. After a siege of three weeks Brussels fell on February 20th, and the oriflamme of Francis I., captured at Pavia by Charles V., could be sent with other trophies to Paris by the new *tapissier de Notre Dame*. Maurice de Saxe became the hero of France. The frontiers of the republic now lay open to the enemy. If it chose the friendship of France over that with England and Austria and accepted the neutrality so repeatedly offered, that was the end of the Anglo-Austrian coalition.<sup>1</sup> If it continued with its old allies, it had to expect an attack from the victorious enemy. Wassenaer found the French statesmen divided and somewhat inclined to concessions; he favoured the neutrality of the republic and even a separate peace and coöperated with the ever active Van Hoey, who was intimate with d'Argenson and incessantly praised the moderation of the French government. Wassenaer's offer of a truce was courteously declined,

<sup>1</sup> De Broglie, *Maurice de Saxe et le marquis d'Argenson*, i., p. 54.



but negotiations with him continued. His French leanings awakened distrust in the States-General, and it was resolved to put a second envoy at his side, the second secretary of the States, Jacob Gilles, being selected for the post. Both negotiators went on with the discussions, even when the court moved with the king to Brussels. There in May a new plan for peace was proposed by the French, and the States-General hastened to communicate it to England. The French proposals were approved neither in London, nor in Vienna, nor in Madrid, and the campaign in the Netherlands was now prosecuted from Brussels. Louvain, Mechlin, the citadel of Antwerp fell, while the "Pragmatic" army remained on the heath around Breda; Mons, all Hainaut, finally Namur, the last of the barrier cities, were taken by the conquering French, and the battle of Rocoux (November 10th) drove the army of the allies, now commanded by Prince Charles of Lorraine, eastwards across the Meuse. The republic's leading statesmen inclined more and more to the conclusion of a separate peace with France. On July 1st the conclave commissioned Wassenaer and Gilles to sign a peace, if England refused negotiation. The long series of defeats made the allies more ready for negotiations. England yielded, and so a beginning was made in August at Breda, the question first being considered whether Sardinia, Spain, and Austria should be drawn in and thus a general peace be striven for. Before the congress of Breda opened, the worthy but weak pensionary died on July 17th. In his place Jacob Gilles was elected in September, an able man but with little experience and still less personal influence. Two years earlier the venerable François Fagel, one of Slingelandt's friends, had laid down his secretaryship and was succeeded by his less capable nephew Hendrik. The conclave could go on its way, but had to be cautious, as was evident when the secret resolution of July 1st be-

came known. Several provinces manifested deep indignation at this unprecedented action of a few members of the States-General in so important a matter, which concerned the entire Union. The peace negotiations of Breda progressed little, and with anxiety the States-General saw the enemy's arms turned more to their side. The army of the allies now amounted to 100,000 men, while that of Maurice de Saxe, inspired by recent victories, numbered over 130,000 men. Meanwhile d'Argenson's weak policy had encountered serious opposition at the French court. De la Ville, still representing French interests at The Hague, long urged a more vigorous attitude towards the powerless republic. The energetic Maurice de Saxe, eager for greater military fame, wanted nothing more than war. The war party demanded the removal of the philosophical but not enterprising statesman in charge of foreign affairs. D'Argenson, dropped also by the powerful Madame de Pompadour, was replaced in January, 1747, by her favourite de Puysieulx, who immediately left Breda. Negotiations continued, but in the spring of 1747 the proposals and counter-proposals were too divergent to give any hope of peace. Under these circumstances it was not to be expected that the French government would adhere to d'Argenson's maxim, that the republic's territory must be respected in any case. Maurice de Saxe received permission in April to move forwards but with instructions to use moderation towards country and people, as it was only desired to exercise a healthful pressure upon the republic's government and not to make any conquests. This was also the substance of the declaration delivered by de la Ville to the States on April 17th. It caused alarm in the assembly, which increased, when deed followed closely upon word and Count Löwenthall at the head of twenty thousand French troops crossed the frontier of Dutch Flanders. By the middle of May all Dutch



Flanders was in French hands, including strong Axel, which surrendered at the first demand. Marshal de Noailles said: "It must be confessed that we have to do with some very obliging people." But this invasion had another consequence, as little expected on the French side as were the facile victories in Dutch Flanders.

With the increase of danger in the southern Netherlands many an eye was turned again to the prince of Orange. The uncertainty of Dutch policy, the complete helplessness of the government also under the new council pensionary gave occasion to violent Orange pamphlets against the stadtholderless administration, which threatened to expose the country to a repetition of the foreign troubles of De Witt's later days. Thus the ground was prepared for a popular movement that some leaders of the Orange party hoped would finally bring the prince to the place where he belonged. Prominent among them was Willem, Count Bentinck, lord of Rhoon and Pendrecht, the son of King William's friend. The events of the spring of 1746 induced him to point out to the prince the "opportune circumstances" and the desirability of no longer hesitating to use them. "A popular revolt where moderation and justice are always thrown aside" was in the prince's eyes a crime; he chose rather to remain "in his solitude." Bentinck began to despair of a happy ending of affairs, until suddenly the invasion of Dutch Flanders made them take a new turn. Fugitives from there caused disturbances in Walcheren. An English squadron under Robert Mitchell appeared before Flushing and undertook to guard the Scheldt. In Middelburg the mob commenced plundering, and soldiers were summoned to the capital from Veere and Flushing. In the night of April 24th to 25th the militia of Veere took up arms and demanded a promise of the burgomaster Verelst, a partisan of Orange, that Veere should propose the prince as stadtholder of the province. Early in the

morning the regents of Veere met and resolved unanimously to propose the prince as stadtholder, admiral and captain-general of Zeeland. From Veere the movement spread to Middelburg, where after some hesitation the government yielded, as was soon the case in the other cities of Zeeland. Within a few days all was over; everywhere waved the Orange flag, everywhere men wore orange ribbons and bows, and on the 28th the Estates of Zeeland resolved to offer the dignities to the prince. The Estates of Holland followed the example of Zeeland on the 3d of May. So did the Estates of Utrecht on the same day, and some days later those of Overijssel. On the 4th the States-General appointed the prince captain and admiral-general of the Union. This completed the revolution, to the prince's satisfaction without any shedding of blood or serious disorders. On the 10th the prince appeared at The Hague to take possession of his new dignities with his wife and his only daughter Carolina, amid the plaudits of the populace and greeted by an interminable series of poetical effusions after the manner of the time. The elevation of the prince produced naturally a bolder attitude towards France. The changed circumstances were shown by the almost immediate declaration of the French and Spanish plenipotentiaries, that they could no longer continue the negotiations at Breda, but were ready to do so in a safer place, suggesting Aix-la-Chapelle or other German cities. But would the prince really be able to rescue the republic? Chesterfield, who knew him and it, did not think so, and at first events proved him right. The war went badly. On July 1st the French defeated Cumberland and Waldeck at Lafeld, not far from Maestricht, and afterwards surrounded Bergen op Zoom, which under the old baron Cronstrom had to sustain a siege, until on September 16th the enemy captured it by surprise, making a profound impression everywhere, and causing a popular



movement against the regents of the States party and against the Catholics suspected of treason. It speedily appeared that the new government also was not in a condition to conjure the perils of the republic at one stroke. Domestic and foreign difficulties accumulated from all sides, and the prince, upon whose shoulders the whole burden pressed, had to free himself as best he could. Many people thought that his power ought to be much greater, and on the 7th of October the nobility of Holland proposed making the stadtholdership hereditary in the male and female lines, so that an "excellent head" would never be lacking in the state. This proposition met with approval everywhere; some believed even that the prince should be created count of Holland to put his sovereign power beyond doubt. To this idea others were joined. The complaints of the selfish exploitation of municipal and post offices by the regents had become very sharp. Universal improvement of these conditions was demanded by public farming out of the offices and by transfer of all postmasterships to the prince. The government acceded to the popular wish concerning the postmasterships in The Hague and elsewhere, but the prince disdained the rich revenues coming to him and turned them over to the States. Another matter agitated men's minds: the abuses in the farming out of the taxes upon consumption. The luxury and wealth of many farmers roused public opinion against them, and among the desired reforms was the replacement of the farming of the revenue by direct collection by receivers. It could not be denied that all sorts of injustices occurred in the farming and collection of the taxes and that many a regent profited thereby. The pamphleteers, springing up on all sides in troublous times, did not fail to point out these abuses; attention was called to them by the well-edited weekly journal of the refugee partisan of the prince, Jean Rousset de Missy, the widely read *Mercure*

*historique et politique*, which was enlightening public opinion as early as 1724. Excitement arose in Holland, and here and there disturbances took place, which were stopped by a display of military force or by a vigorous placard issued by the States with the prince's approval. Manifestly the prince was not disposed to play into the hands of such popular movements, especially now that the enemy stood at the door. There was little difficulty in making the dignities hereditary, and on November 16th the Estates of Holland and West Friesland agreed to this, which example was followed in Zealand, Gelderland, Overijssel, and Utrecht. Before the end of the year the States-General also declared the posts of admiral- and captain-general hereditary in the male and female lines. While domestic disturbances continued through 1747 and the spring of 1748, while the power of the house of Orange was constantly growing, not least in consequence of the birth on March 8th of a male heir, who received the name of William, foreign affairs and the war gave the new leader of the republic not an instant of rest.

The elevation of the prince signified naturally a closer adhesion to England and the allies. Chesterfield, now influential again in England, wanted nothing more than peace, but the leader of the English policy, the duke of Newcastle, was of another opinion. The Orange party would not hear to peace, and, at the first report of negotiations between England and France in the French camp, Bentinck, the actual manager of foreign relations in the republic, was sent to London in August to oppose the peace plans and to urge support of the threatened republic. With lavish promises of coöperation he succeeded in persuading England to break off negotiations with France and returned home in September. The employment of thirty thousand Russians by the allies was accomplished by a treaty with Russia in December, and



the prince promised that the republic in the ensuing spring would furnish seventy thousand men for the allied army, provided England did the same, and that it would formally declare war upon France. But how was money to be obtained for waging war? It was a fact that some provinces were millions in arrears and that all public treasuries suffered from a lack of money. Holland believed it had found the means by issuing (September 12th) a so-called voluntary loan over the whole province, amounting to 2 per cent. of everybody's property over 2000 guilders, to 1 per cent. on property between 1000 and 2000 guilders, and a really voluntary gift on property of lower value. At the prince's instigation the other provinces soon followed Holland's example. Expectations ran high, but serious difficulties arose in the winter. The republic's troops—*véritable canaille* Cumberland called them—were not of the best quality; the prince had to give the chief command to Cumberland. While preparations for war went on, the negotiation with France was not entirely given up, although the representatives of the various powers did not meet in Aix-la-Chapelle until March. At the same time Bentinck's brother Charles crossed over to England to present a petition in the prince's name, which laid bare the republic's unfortunate condition. It declared that the republic "since its existence has never been more exposed to being invaded or overwhelmed"; danger of war, high prices, the ruin of commerce and navigation made peace indispensable, so the prince asserted; peace alone could save the republic, for the war promised slight success, and there was no money. The voluntary loan had raised considerable, and Holland by a lottery had scraped together eight millions more, but the other provinces remained in arrears, and to escape bankruptcy it was necessary to have immediately eleven to thirteen million pounds sterling even at double interest. An appeal to the king's

friendship for the poor republic closed the document, on which the prince's name made a pitiful impression. It awakened bitter disappointment in England. The "shameful document" opened people's eyes there to the true conditions, and from that moment Newcastle saw that peace must be concluded; Cumberland also, who could not find words enough to brand the Dutch army, desired peace. With merited reproaches to the prince and his friends England looked anxiously for the demands to be made by France. Fortunately for the allies the French government was in the weak hands of Louis XV. and his favourites and mistresses. Maurice de Saxe was not in a position to use the fine opportunity of crushing France's enemies. His subordinate Löwenthall did not penetrate further into Brabant, but with him in April laid siege to Maestricht, which was defended by Baron van Aylva, while Cumberland's army was powerless to relieve it. The negotiations at Aix-la-Chapelle went on rapidly under these circumstances. Here too the republic's representatives cut a sad figure; England and France settled the chief points of the peace, and all the efforts of the Dutch to treat on an equal footing were repulsed both in the preliminaries of April 30th, stipulating the surrender of Maestricht, and in the peace concluded on October 18th after a long suspension of arms. The republic received back its fortresses, most of them demolished, but there was no talk of any advantage. It might reckon itself fortunate thus to have come out of the conflict, though with deep humiliation, the consequence of its shameful state of affairs. So deep had the republic of the United Netherlands sunk in 1748, a miserable spectacle to its friends, an object of ridicule to its foes. Could it ever rise again? The answer to this question depended upon that to another: would he, who now led it, be able to bring about the necessary reforms?





## CHAPTER VII

### REFORMS UNDER WILLIAM IV.

**B**EFORE the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was actually concluded Bentinck in Holland and other "zealous defenders of the restored form of government"<sup>1</sup> in other provinces had attempted to effect a change in the entire government of the republic. The men, who had recently had in their hands the management of affairs, still sat in the governing boards. If the republic was really to undergo complete regeneration, new blood must be brought into the organs of government, and it was natural that the Orange party, so long out of office, should be desirous of securing possession of the administration in town and country. The temper of the people, dissatisfied with years of abuses, indignant at the ill success of the war, which was attributed to the corruption of the ruling regents, was favourable to such designs; it might be used to produce the desired changes. The Orange leaders were quite ready to take advantage of this temper and, after the example of what had been done in 1672, to stir up popular movements for the purpose of deposing the regents. The prince himself, unlike William III. and Maurice, was little pleased with such popular movements. But he lacked the strength of mind to resist the pressure of Bentinck and his friends and half unwillingly let himself be carried along on the stream. The "revolution" of 1747 and 1748 furnished to the

<sup>1</sup> Wagenaar, xx., p. 194.

fallen republic nothing but an increase of the stadtholder's power and a change of persons in the various governments. This alone was not sufficient to raise it from the depths, where it had sunk and was to continue for nearly half a century longer. There was great excitement on the occasion of the birth of the heir of the Nassau dynasty, who first saw the light on March 8, 1748, under the title of Count of Burren. Excessive joy was manifested all over the country. Everywhere bells rang, cannon thundered, and tar barrels blazed. Songs were sung in honour of "Netherland's morning star," the "hereditary governor of the land," the young branch of "the Lord's vine in Netherland,"<sup>1</sup> whose glorious future was vividly depicted. Assemblies of the Estates and municipal governments competed for the honour of being godfathers to the new-born babe, and annuities to the value of thousands of guilders were thrown as gifts into his cradle. The joyful disposition of the people, excited further by the signature of the "preliminary points" at Aix-la-Chapelle on April 30th, seemed to offer an opportunity of arousing a popular movement against the hated regents.

The agitation against the farmers of the revenue, kept smouldering by Jean Rousset's weekly, first caused a rising against the government in Friesland. The demands of the populace were formulated at Leeuwarden in three points: stadtholdership hereditary also in the female line; abolition of the farming of the revenue; restoration of the "old laws" of the country. Immediately the Estates did away with the farming of the revenue. Later the stadtholdership was made hereditary in the female line. Full authority was given to the prince to establish the state on a firm basis, to correct abuses, and to promulgate such laws as seemed best

<sup>1</sup> See the titles of the pamphlets in Knuttel, *Catalogus*, iv., p. 231.



to him. The prince was lord and master in Friesland, elevated by the almost childlike confidence of the people. Not otherwise went affairs in City and Land, where the doings of the ruling aristocracy had produced no less confusion and dissatisfaction. Agreeable to the wish of citizens and peasants the decision of everything was transferred to the prince. He promised to put affairs in order speedily. Even little Drenthe saw a popular movement, which was limited to demanding the hereditability of the stadtholdership in both lines, reform of some abuses, and regulation of the revenue farming. In Overijssel and Gelderland there was some opposition to the farmers, whose existence was continued for a time by the prince's advice. In Utrecht the Estates quickly yielded to the demand for abolition of the farming of the revenue. Order was maintained in Zealand. Affairs did not go so quietly in Holland. In this province also it was known, if not legally proved, that a large part of the money contributed by the citizens disappeared in the pockets of the regents, that the farmers of the revenue secured favourable terms by assuring profits to the ruling persons and families. The houses of farmers at Haarlem were plundered by a savage mob; their books were burned; they themselves were maltreated, until courtiers of the prince came to exhort to peace. Disturbances now began at Leyden, so that the city government there had to suspend the farming of the revenue. At The Hague also the houses of the farmers were pillaged, while the prince, called upon for help, declared he was indisposed. The movement was especially violent in Amsterdam, where the militia fired upon the mob of plunderers and killed several, then allowed some finely furnished houses to be pillaged, and finally, from fear of worse things, acted vigorously again and shot down the robbers. The odious farming of the revenue could not be maintained in this province. The prince himself

came unexpectedly on June 25th to the meeting of the Estates of Holland and proposed doing away with the revenue farming. On the following day the farms were abolished after having existed over two centuries. It appeared to be very difficult to find a good and equitable system of taxation, though it rained plans. Finally the Estates of Holland chose collection, and the instructions for the collectors were drawn up, so that with 1750 the old revenues in this province were thus collected, an important reform. The farmers of the revenue were indemnified for the plundering suffered with 300,000 guilders. In this province, the seat of the regents' tyranny, people were not satisfied with a new system of taxation. There was much more to complain of. The disgraceful management of the municipal finances for the benefit of a few, the incredible abuses in conferring offices, the venality and partisanship of the judges awakened vexation at the rule of the regents, who would not hear to any influence of the people upon the government. On June 25, 1748, the prince urged removal of the evils in the bestowal of offices and the settlement of the affair of the post-offices in Amsterdam. The powerful council of Amsterdam, in which for years the families of the Corvers, Sixes, and Sautijns held all authority, showed slight willingness to consent. This aroused deep indignation among the citizens of Amsterdam, who were stirred up by agents of Bentinck, not without the prince's knowledge, and by pamphlets. The surgeon Andries Boekelman, the pattern-maker Hendrik van Gimnig, the publicist Rousset, and others met secretly and read these pamphlets zealously. The most violent agitators frequented taverns and coffee-houses, appeared among the militia in the night watch, and so gathered followers, who soon wished to go further than the affairs of the offices and the post-offices and drew up eleven articles. Laurens van der Meer, a partisan of Orange and a baker at Rotter-



dam, was invited to Amsterdam to put his "friends on the right track," and the popular porcelain merchant, Daniel Raap, thought matters had gone too far. In agreement with the court Van der Meer and De Huyser formulated three more moderate articles to be offered to the city council. The violent reformers would not accept them. They suggested meetings of the citizens, two, three, or four persons representing each section, to consider grievances and their remedies. A commission of five persons was to be appointed to present propositions to the proper authorities. It was resolved to hold the assemblies publicly in the shooting-gallery of the arquebusiers, and on August 9th a great crowd gathered there. Van Gimnig unfolded the eleven articles for restoring the liberties of the citizens and requested the appointment of the commission from the sixty sections of the city. In opposition the moderates proposed the three articles approved of at The Hague. They embraced simply: transfer of the post-offices to the prince; reform of abuses in giving offices; restoration of the privileges of the guilds and appointment of colonels and captains of militia from the citizens. A contest arose between the outvoted moderates and the violent party. Van der Meer and Raap went to The Hague to secure the powerful support of the court for their moderate views. The city government, meanwhile, requested the chief officers of the militia to assemble the citizens in their sections and to ask for their proposals or complaints. Raap brought word from The Hague that the prince gave the preference to the three articles of Van der Meer and De Huyser. The moderate party led by Van der Meer and Raap sought to calm the shooting-gallery people, who were angrily calling for arms. Finally the burgo-masters signed the request of the three articles with their *fiat*. The consent of the city council was now lacking. The multitude, incited by Boekelman and his friends, de-

manded this also, and the city council yielded on August 28th, but at the same time declared it laid down its functions voluntarily, only one member continuing to act. An end had to come, if there was not to be a serious revolution, and the Estates of Holland passed a resolution, by which the prince was authorised "to put all means at work to bring Amsterdam again to tranquillity and, if necessary, to change the government." On September 2d he departed for Amsterdam with Bentinck, the clerk Fagel, and the secretary De Back. The meetings went on at the shooting-gallery even after the burgo-masters had been replaced and seventeen of the thirty-six members of the city council had been dismissed. In place of the dismissed members merchants were appointed from families that had never taken part in the government. They formed an honourable series of "patricians of '48." On the 15th the prince left the turbulent city, being followed by the blessings of the multitude. The whole popular movement resulted merely in a change of the government, unsatisfactory to the many, who accused Raap and his friends of being bribed. Among the people there was little more talk of the democratic principles championed so violently by Van Gimnig and his followers. The uncertainty at Amsterdam during this summer had caused much injury to commerce, and all engaged in commercial pursuits—that is almost all Amsterdam—had turned against the agitators of the shooting-gallery, blaming them for the heavy losses incurred. The authority of the prince rose ever higher. At the end of 1748 the States-General had appointed him hereditary stadtholder of the generality lands and hereditary captain-general and admiral. In March, 1749, the two great commercial companies made him their chief director and governor.

The political organisation of the republic was thus strongly developed in a monarchical direction, and the



hereditary stadtholder was more powerful than any of his predecessors. His supreme authority was recognised. From him were now expected a better general guidance, a greater development of the state's resources, reform of army and navy, revival of the former prosperity, a regeneration of the entire nation—a hard task for the prince placed at the head of the republic. He could not hide from himself that the old machine of state was not broken, but his power of governing it was considerably increased, and so his responsibility was excessively enlarged. Supported as he was by the citizens, it lay in his hand to improve the machine of state by augmenting the influence of the citizens upon the government, as the great prince, William I., had indicated, but he did not desire this. He wished to maintain the old "aristocratical" form of government, redressing the most crying abuses, removing the most hated regents and replacing them by the later so-called "forty-eighters," and balancing the still threatening oligarchy by increasing the powers of the "eminent head" of the republic. This balance the prince could alone secure by a pernicious system of secret correspondence with the foremost regents, by intrigues and favours that raised the lowest passions to means of government. The republic could not be permanently preserved in this way. The prince, who did not excel in independence of judgment, had followed the advice of his most trusted friends. First among them were the two Bentincks, especially Willem, the elder and abler, who hurt his influence by lack of tact, so that the prince gave free play to less able men, such as Onno Zwier van Haren, Sirtema van Grovestins, the baron van Gronsfelt, the intriguing secretary De Back, who had all been attached to the prince for years in Friesland. The council pensionary Gilles, a willing creature of the regents, had naturally to quit the field. On May 3, 1749, he resigned under pressure from Ben-

tinck and was succeeded, also on Bentinck's advice, by an extremely competent financier, the pensionary of Haarlem, Pieter Steyn, whose instructions made him promise to report all affairs of state to the stadtholder, so that this official of Holland might thenceforth be called the first minister of the hereditary stadtholder. Bentinck desired the establishment of a stadtholder's council, but during his absence his adversaries at court thwarted this plan. In its place came the harmful influence of irresponsible advisers. After the experience of the last war there was not the least doubt that the army needed reform. The prince, who was not very military, felt unequal to this, and in 1747 he fixed his eyes<sup>1</sup> on the Austrian field-marshal, Duke Ludwig Ernst von Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, who had attracted attention in the succession war. Three times the duke declined to enter the Dutch service. In 1749 Bentinck went to Vienna to make him another offer, and the duke finally accepted. A salary of sixty thousand guilders and the promise of the governorship of Bois-le-Duc, while he kept the title of Austrian field-marshal and general of artillery of the German empire, seemed to compensate for what he gave up in the Austrian service. The new field-marshal arrived at The Hague on December 15, 1750, where he quickly complained of the army's miserable condition, of the desperate state of affairs in the fatally disordered republic, not least of the opposition of the dominant court clique and of the weakness of the prince's character. Some improvement of defence was to be made in 1751.

There was less disappointment in the plans for reforming the navy. The prince asked enlightenment of the able vice-admiral Cornelis Schrijver, who did not fail to point out the sad fall of "naval power" in consequence of neglect and ignorance. The ships were largely unseaworthy; shipbuilding had so declined that in 1727 the

<sup>1</sup> Nijhoff, *De Hertog van Brunswijk*, p. 4.



Amsterdam admiralty had to take into its service English naval architects; the crews were inexperienced and scanty; from shameful nepotism the officers were often incompetent; discipline on the fleet left everything to be desired. The establishment of a college for seamen at Amsterdam in 1747 was a good step forwards. The nomination of Schrijver as lieutenant-admiral and the appointment of a number of flag-officers improved the conduct of naval affairs. In the short time of his government the prince did what he could for this important interest, but evidently no great good could be accomplished without comprehensive reforms. For this the prince was not the man, although later what his "fatherly care and never sufficiently praised zeal" had effected was remembered with gratitude. The restoration of prosperity had to be taken in hand, the condition of commerce and industry requiring serious measures of reform. Commercial treaties with foreign powers had to be renewed. De Larrey, in 1748, immediately after the peace sent to Paris with the Amsterdam merchant Marselis, found there slight disposition to grant good terms. The ambassador, Van Hoey, was soon replaced by the trusted partisan of the prince, Lestevenon van Berkenrode. A menace to Dutch interests was the establishment in England of a chartered fishery company, which enticed many Dutch fishermen to England, so that a placard of the States-General in 1750 was issued against taking service in the commerce or fishery of foreign powers. Prussia also began to appear as a competitor, a new East Indian and African company being formed, for which the king, Frederick II., vainly sought access to the Dutch company's ports. Sweden drew away a number of Dutch manufactures and became a victorious rival in the tea trade. Commerce with Spain and Portugal had gone over into English, French, Swedish, Hamburg hands. That of the Mediterranean Sea was taken more and

more by merchants from Sweden, Hamburg, Lübeck, and Stettin. Trade with China threatened to slip away entirely. England and France commenced taking the republic's place in a number of markets. Even in the Austrian Netherlands an effort was made to get free from Dutch commercial supremacy by digging canals and improving other means of communication. The growing foreign competition and the decline of commerce and industry became ever more notable, and both branches of national prosperity called loudly for protection. The complaints of the silk weavers of Amsterdam were followed in May, 1749, by a declaration from the prince that he had resolved thenceforth to use domestic stuffs only for himself and his court.

It was almost the universal conviction that the interest of commerce demanded more freedom. De Larrey in the prince's name consulted some of the most noted merchants of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, including the firms of Marselis, Hope, Brouwer, Van Eys, Dull, St. Martin, Herzele, and Wor, who nearly all believed that commerce would be best served by complete abolition of import and export duties, by making the whole country a free port, as Hamburg and Bremen had already done. That alone could "keep us from total ruin." A council of commerce at The Hague, with chambers of commerce in the principal cities, was to give the stadtholder information. Some exceptions to free trade might be made on behalf of agriculture and manufactures. The result of these deliberations was a *Treatise on the commerce of the state of the United Netherlands*, probably drawn up by De Larrey.<sup>1</sup> In this important work, after a survey of the causes leading up to the flourishing commerce of

<sup>1</sup> An abstract of it in Wagenaar, p. 412. The whole work in the *Nederl. Jaarboeken*, 1751, p. 894, and in Sloet's *Tijdschrift*, i., 3, p. 57. See De Beaufort, *Engelsche en Hollandsche vrijhandelsplannen*, in *Geschiedkundige Opstellen*, i., p. 154.



the country, the present fallen condition was examined. Heavy taxes and sharp competition were the chief reasons of the fall. Four proposals were presented: free transit of all imported goods that were again exported; revision of the list of 1725; universal free port with a tonnage duty on vessels for the support of the admiralities; limited free port, indicating what goods should be wholly free, what should pay an import duty to be returned upon exportation (drawback). The prince delivered this document to the States-General and to Holland on August 27, 1751, to be deliberated upon. Then it was sent to the other provinces and admiralities, and was printed. Observations of all kinds were made, but in general the project was received with satisfaction, and the various boards set about studying it. The time seemed to have come also for extensive reform and improvement of the great commercial companies, at least of the East India Company, which possessed an energetic and reforming governor-general in Van Imhoff. Arriving at Batavia, May 28, 1743, this governor immediately went to work, formulated regulations, had projects worked out and reports presented with almost feverish haste. In the midst of his efforts he had to contend with troubles in Java on account of his vigorous interference in the affairs of the natives. Before Van Imhoff saw the ripe fruits of his plans for reform, he died on November 1, 1750, just when a rising of the natives was threatening the company's power. Director-general Mossel, later confirmed as governor-general, dropped all further reforms in order first of all to rescue the authority of the company in Java.

While the first years of the prince's government were full of trouble, uneasiness and uncertainty continued also after many things were settled. It was felt that the supreme authority did not rest in strong hands, and there was regret that the prince lacked firmness of prin-

ciple, being sometimes under the influence of Bentinck, Steyn, Fagel, and De Larrey, and again yielding to the inspirations of the very influential cabal of Gronsfelt, De Back, and the Van Harens,<sup>1</sup> who found powerful support in the princess. In 1750 growing discontent became manifest with the way the desired reforms were applied under the only slightly changed governing boards. People complained of a want of earnestness, vigour, and order in the administration, of the venality of influential courtiers, of confusion in the prince's affairs, particularly in the finances, when many things remained undone in consequence of his increasing bodily weakness. The prince's health grew continually worse, and in May it appeared necessary for the princess to attend to many governmental matters. In summer his shortness of breath became so serious, the result of a curvature of the spine, that a sojourn at Aix-la-Chapelle seemed advisable in September. Returning half recovered, the prince again grew feverish; soon came attacks, alternating with periods of improvement, until on October 22, 1751, the prince died unexpectedly from erysipelas suddenly appearing in the head. He was somewhat over forty years old and left the remembrance of a good-hearted, honest, and kind man, not unwilling to reform abuses, but at the same time a man of mediocre gifts, little independence, and slight energy, not fitted for the hard task, which the disordered condition of the republic laid upon his shoulders, when it put itself wholly under his guidance. This was so evident that no noteworthy disturbance arose at his death, although an official eulogist spoke of the sorrow everywhere prevailing and some poetasters complained tragically of the *acerba et immatura mors*. More confidence is deserved by the cool utterance of a regent favourable to the prince: "No consternation in the world," and by Brunswick's declaration to the empress

<sup>1</sup> See Hardenbroek, *Gedenkschriften*, i., p. 64.



Maria Theresa—"the great love, which the prince formerly enjoyed among the people, is changed to coolness and contempt, indeed to something worse." And the worst was that the prince himself had to recognise that there was reason for this feeling. His death could not be considered a great loss to the republic, and more than one pamphlet doubted the desirability of wearing mourning.





## CHAPTER VIII

### PRINCESS ANNE'S REGENCY

EVEN if the period of a regency were not an unsuitable time for extensive reforms, there would have been little thought of such reforms under the lead of the princess, who now appeared at the head of the republic in accordance with the stipulations made and thanks to the powerful support of Bentinck and to the regents' fear of the attitude of the citizens. Princess Anne, reared in the traditions of the English court and feeling herself a born royal princess of England, had with all her sagacity too little insight into the necessities of the state, at whose head she stood with so extended an authority. Meaning generally to do right and stronger of will than her dead husband, indefatigable in work, simple and domestic, irreproachable in life, she suffered from weak health and lacked the independence to throw off the influence of her surroundings, particularly of the Frisian court cabal, which during the prince's life had so often exerted with her help a pernicious activity in affairs of state; her passionateness and obstinacy made her task still more difficult. She sought the highest political wisdom in tacking between the two parties, favouring in turn one and the other and hoping thus to thwart the influence of powerful Amsterdam.<sup>1</sup> The intriguing secretary De Back, the soul of the court cabal formed by his friends, Onno Zwier van Haren, Grovestins, Gronsfelt,

<sup>1</sup> Groen van Prinsterer, *Handboek*, 5<sup>de</sup> druk, p. 517.



Bigot, the officer of the guards De la Sarraz, and others, was soon the chief personage at court, while the Bentincks and the council pensionary, with the insignificant clerk Fagel, were thrust quite into the background, and even the duke of Brunswick, just the man to manage military affairs and advise the governess, was at first left unconsulted. The princess had a personal aversion to Willem Bentinck, whose ambition, lack of self-control, and conceit had been extremely disagreeable to her from the first; she mistrusted Brunswick, whom she suspected of endeavouring to place himself at the head of the republic. Bentinck and Brunswick did not yield the field to the court cabal: the former, a member of the council of state, leader of the nobility of Holland, and influential still in foreign affairs, went on telling the princess hard truths, and the latter tried to overcome gradually the insulting distrust of the princess. With them the able Steyn, as council pensionary powerful in Holland, exerted his influence; an excellent financier, he made the greatest efforts, with the treasurer-general Jan Hop, to bring into a better condition the disordered finances of Holland, which in 1750 had a debt of seventy millions and a deficit of twenty-eight millions.

Under these circumstances there was no talk of reforms, not even of continuing what had been begun by the prince, and the princess was satisfied with preservation of her power. The commercial plans went entirely into the book of oblivion. The admiralty boards of Holland answered in April, 1752, that they could not at once advise the adoption of a limited or complete free port, unless the administration of the admiralties was first reformed, but a trial of the limited free port might be made during five years. The advice of the Zealand board considered the interests of the province injured. It admitted that in theory much was to be said in favour of the project, but expressed serious doubt as to its

desirability on account of the competition everywhere increasing. The Estates of Zealand warned against "overturning those principles and maxims, in which the republic has found and maintained itself so well," and pronounced the foundations of the new system "uncertain hope and pure hazard." The objections, shared by many merchants of Holland, gave rise to new deliberations, which had not come to an end, when in 1755 the great naval war between France and England broke out, the commerce of both these powers being harmed by it, while Dutch commerce began to flourish again in consequence of the republic's neutrality. Thus commercial affairs were delayed on account also of the complaints of industry. In Gelderland the paper manufacturers of the Veluwe asked for duties on foreign paper and rags. In Utrecht the protection of the tobacco industry was urged. In Overijssel the linen manufacturers of Twente mourned the neglect of their interests. In City and Land the owners of peat bogs requested duties on coal for the benefit of their turf. In Friesland support was desired for the limekilns. All complained that industry was put after commerce in the proposed plans. The landowners also opposed free trade, and the cattle-raisers feared foreign competition. Each looked at his own interest before that of the general public and demanded recognition of that interest. At a meeting of deputies from the admiralties at The Hague (March, 1754) it was resolved to propose a "limited free port," retaining export duties on some goods and freeing comparatively few from import duties. But the draught, embracing two hundred and eight-four articles with a tariff annexed, got no farther than the States-General without ever being deliberated upon. So the plan for introducing complete or limited free trade or even a comprehensive revision of the tariff came to nothing, and commerce in the republic remained fixed upon the same foundations as



before. Commerce soon growing again made the adoption of extraordinary measures less necessary. Industry went down hill continually. It was calculated about 1770 that in the last thirty years no less than 22,000 workmen had left the country owing to lack of work; in Leyden of 80 cloth factories in 1735 more than half had disappeared sixteen years later; in 1757 alone 60 families left that city to continue the manufacture of cloth in Spain. The herring fishery saw a falling off from 235 herring busses in 1750 to 149 in 1770. It was not otherwise with the great companies. Though some of Van Imhoff's improvements stood fast, his chief reform, the introduction of free trade, was given up, and his successor Mossel resumed the standpoint of the merchant: "The Company is a distinguished merchant and therefore its commerce must be a distinguished, privileged commerce." Thus ended the reform period here, and men went on in the old way. By using cleverly the dissensions between the rebellious natives Mossel succeeded in dividing them and in saving the company's authority. The treaty of Ganti, February 13, 1755, brought all Java under the company's rule. But this increase of power was attended by no internal improvement, and Mossel and his successors were content with the watchword soon universally heard in India: "It will last my time." And the managers of the company in the fatherland thought not differently. Loan upon loan had to put the company in a condition to keep its engagements, and the most shameful abuses remained rich sources of revenue to directors and officials—so long as the pitcher did not break. Things went somewhat better in the West Indies.

Little was done to carry out the plans for reforming and improving army and navy. The princess angered the duke of Brunswick, the head of the army, by presenting to the Estates of Holland in December, 1752,

without his approval, a plan for reducing the troops considerably and for effecting economies. The plan was accepted, and the duke yielded. Now and then the princess spurred on the admiralties to protect commerce better, particularly against the Algerine piracies. A formal declaration of war by Algiers in 1755 began a period of open hostilities with this powerful robber state. A squadron of eight ships, commanded by the rear-admiral Boudaen, succeeded in protecting navigation in the Mediterranean Sea, and in the following year and 1757 similar squadrons under Wassenaer and Sels did likewise, so that the dey of Algiers saw himself obliged to conclude peace. Though reforms were not made, it was plain that more could be done with the navy than in recent years; but there was no naval strength equal to the importance of the republic as a maritime power; now, as in the years of admiral Schrijver's great plans, little more was accomplished than the scribbling of pamphlets for and against. The chief mistake was that reform of the government was not considered with the requisite seriousness. There was no real governmental council; for foreign affairs the princess continued to use the "conference," in which the Bentincks and De Larrey sat with the council pensionary and the clerk; for domestic matters she was guided mainly by the advice of unworthy favourites, who soon established the conviction that at her court everything could be bought for money. The rule of the princess, who as a foreigner was less respected than her husband, soon aroused general discontent and raised partisans against her, menacing the continuance of her authority. The pamphlets at Amsterdam against the princess began to take an insulting tone without any interference from the city government, so that she avoided the great city in a journey to Friesland. Warnings of all kinds were not wanting against the course of affairs. In his talks with



the princess, Bentinck did not hesitate to point out to her the existing dangers; De Larrey did his best to reduce the harm; Brunswick submitted to neglect in the hope of better days. The fury of the Amsterdam populace against the corpse of Daniel Raap on January 15, 1754, was directed not only against the former shooting-gallery leader but also against the adherent of the stadtholder form of government, which had given rise to so much disappointment.

It needs no demonstration to prove that affairs went wretchedly and that the republic lost all consideration at home and abroad. The court cabal, led by De Back and Van Haren, manifested a strong inclination to be friends with France and Prussia and to renounce the old alliance with England and Austria. Of importance were the negotiations begun at Paris after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle concerning the restoration of the favourable terms of 1739 for commerce with France. But the unpromising attitude of the regents of Holland towards the French ambassador made the French government less than ever disposed to yield anything, though it was plainly intimated at Paris that good conditions might be the price for closer political relations with France. Bentinck warned the princess against this, showing that the party of the regents of old friendly to France had not disappeared but was still working secretly, while the partisans of the "old system" of an alliance with England were not sufficiently united. An important question was what was to become of the barrier fortresses demolished by the French—Namur alone retaining its walls—which were in so sad a state that Austria refused to settle the subsidies in arrears. The French ambassador at The Hague, de Bonnac, did his best to prevent any restoration of the barrier. In the winter of 1752-1753 Bentinck went to discuss the matter in company with the Dutch ambassador in Brussels, Willem van Haren;

but it was soon plain to them that the Austrian government in concluding a new barrier treaty would try to remove the obstacles to commerce and industry in the southern provinces. Bentinck appeared not unwilling to accept a commercial treaty between Austria and the maritime powers, desirous as he was to maintain the old alliance as long as possible. But Dutch commerce, led by the government of Amsterdam, would not hear to this, and Bentinck, financially embarrassed from long dissensions with his wife, was openly accused of having been bribed. So negotiations dragged, while the English ambassador appearing at The Hague in 1751, the harsh Sir Joseph Yorke, was not the man to help them on. The new French ambassador, d'Affry, keeping up close relations with regents friendly to France, excelled in clever statesmanship. The barrier remained, but the fortresses were not restored to a satisfactory condition. While Dutch statesmen took the "old system" as the basis of their policy, this system was far on the road to ruin. The struggle between Maria Theresa and Frederick II. of Prussia, in which she long asked in vain for the aid against France of the maritime powers allied with her, decided her to make advances to France. She did this at the instance of the leader of her diplomacy, von Kaunitz, who saw his plans crowned with success on May 1, 1756, by a treaty concluded at Versailles between Austria and France. The barrier was thenceforth a mockery of existing relations. This sudden change in European politics gave a hard blow to the foundations, upon which the republic's foreign policy had been established for more than half a century. A speedy and to Dutch statesmen quite unexpected end was made of the "old system," which was founded by William III., adhered to by Heinsius and Slingelandt, followed by William IV., and apparently confirmed again by the coming over to the republic of the Austrian field-marshal



Brunswick high in favour with Maria Theresa. The relations between France and England had become strained in consequence of difficulties in Asia and America. French colonial policy asserted itself vigorously after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. In Hither India the able Dupleix was establishing French influence in opposition to that of England. From Canada efforts were made by a chain of posts through the Ohio valley to connect this important French possession north of the English colonies on the coast with Louisiana, the other French colony far away in the south at the mouth of the Mississippi, and thus to shut off the English colonies from the vast interior of America. On the West Indian islands a sharp competition prevailed between the two powers. In eastern Africa the islands of Réunion and Mauritius, with the old settlement on Madagascar, were stations for France on the road to India. French ports possessed a flourishing colonial trade that aroused the uneasiness of England. Conducted by the energetic William Pitt on the way to universal supremacy on the sea, England was firmly resolved to crush its growing rival, and in 1755 war actually began in America; an English fleet commenced capturing French merchantmen and did not even leave French war-ships unmolested. In the spring the great naval war between the two powers was a fact.

This naval war was an extremely dangerous affair for the republic, so closely allied with England. The treaties with England, interpreted literally, would compel it to side with England. And not indifferent to it could the land war remain, in which Prussia took the initiative in August, so as not to be surprised, Russia and Saxony-Poland having become the allies of Austria against Prussia. But what could the republic do with its broken army and disabled navy in a war, where the greatest armies and most powerful navies of the world opposed

one another? It stood defenceless against any power that might venture to attack it. Neutrality was the universal wish of the country. France, intending to operate on the Rhine and in Hanover, asked nothing better, and d'Affry maintained relations with leading statesmen and the influential court party, also distributing liberally orders of knighthood to regents. England wanted the republic to adhere to the old treaties, engaging it, in case of an attack upon that country, to help with six thousand troops and twenty ships, and Austria urged participation in its new alliance. The princess, personally favourable to the king of Prussia, and the council pensionary Steyn, who with Amsterdam wished to avoid war at any price, were, like Brunswick and most other Dutch statesmen, of the opinion that the republic must finally go with England but that so long as possible the most complete neutrality should be observed. The press began its task of preparing public opinion; both parties assailed each other in pamphlets and proved the desirability or undesirability of joining one side or the other. The able historian Wagenaar, in a series of anonymous pamphlets, asserted that the republic was not pledged to aid England. To d'Affry's cautious inquiry in February, 1756, as to the side chosen by the republic, it was officially answered proudly<sup>1</sup> that the republic desired to remain neutral, provided the war was not carried over to England and in the hope that the barrier and Dutch territory would be respected by the French. Some days later Yorke insisted that the six thousand men should be furnished, England immediately sending the necessary transports for them, but he was told in great embarrassment after a sharp remonstrance from d'Affry that strict neutrality would be observed, while

<sup>1</sup> *Vaderl. Historie*, xxii., p. 253. D'Affry said in ridicule that it seemed as if the republic still had 650,000 men and 80 ships (Groen van Prinsterer, *Handboek*, p. 527).



he was privately asked if help could be omitted without offending England too much. The English ambassador reported that his government would not press the demand for the present and sent back the transports already appearing at Hellevoetsluis. But England did not forgive the covered refusal and repeatedly threatened to repeal the treaties thus violated.

The consequences of this weakness were not absent. While France showed satisfaction at the feeble attitude of the republic and in reward aided its commerce by favourable stipulations, England began to capture and to declare as prizes Dutch vessels reputed to carry "contraband." It was not to be denied that many Dutch merchants in trading with the French islands in the West Indies gave good cause for such practices. Commerce with the French coasts also afforded reason to legitimate complaints from the English side. English privateers everywhere attacked and captured Dutch ships; English war-ships did the same. Vehement complaints followed on the part of the Dutch. The admiralties hesitated to furnish convoys for the protection of commerce from fear of difficulties like those leading to the first English war and from want of funds, as they were head over ears in debt. On land and sea care had to be taken to avoid hostilities from the belligerents, and at any moment trouble might arise. That this was no groundless fear appeared from many a movement of the French and Prussian armies towards the open eastern frontiers, always fortunately diverted in time by victories of the opposing party to another part of the seat of war. Naturally the question came up whether both army and navy ought not to be strengthened in order to preserve neutrality. Dutch merchants wanted strong convoys for their merchantmen and constantly addressed vigorous representations to the States. Finally Holland proposed to fit out stronger convoys, and the States-

General resolved to send to sea fourteen ships as convoys with four thousand men. But the admiralties had no money to execute the order. The general petition of 1757, drawn up by the princess and the council of state, remarked earnestly upon the sad fall of the sea power, counting not even thirty ships, so that the ruin of commerce and navigation was at the door. The increase of the army was strongly pleaded in this notable general petition, it having dropped to thirty-three thousand men. The document made a deep impression. Four provinces assented to all its proposals, but Zealand declared itself unable, and Holland and Friesland, while confirming the necessity of augmenting the navy, refused to sanction any increase of the army, so that the affair remained in suspense, as the princess declined to provide for the navy without doing something also for the army. With difficulty the impoverished admiralties fitted out the fourteen ships required. Some of these ships upheld the honour of the flag in an admirable manner, but they were too few in number to protect Dutch commerce in all seas. From all sides came complaints and estimates of the losses already sustained, which were put at over twelve millions in a loss of fifty-six vessels sailing to Curaçao, St. Eustatius, and other Antilles. While Holland, despite the occupation of Ostend and Nieuwpoort by French troops and the violation of Dutch territory on the Meuse, disputed the necessity of increasing the army and was supported by Friesland, while Yorke in England's name complained loudly of French activity in Belgium with the connivance of the Austrian government, the merchants of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Dordrecht began to apply to the princess. In June, 1758, a number of them went to court and received the promise of support in case proofs were given her. A new deputation brought them in July, but the princess had already visited the Estates of Holland twice and urged an in-



crease of army and navy. Holland now resolved to fit out six frigates, and the land provinces requested an increase of the army by thirteen thousand men. So matters advanced not a step, and the losses at sea went on.

Meanwhile the state of war made itself felt in the poverty of the families of seamen imprisoned in England, in the standstill of some export business, in the heavy losses of merchants. Again the merchants turned to the princess hoping through her intervention to obtain something from George II., her father, or from the States. They offered her in November new lists of losses, which announced in addition to the twelve millions already mentioned further losses of thirteen millions through the capture by England of no less than sixty Dutch ships. The princess declared she had done what she could. She asked: "What do you want me to do?" and requested patience for a few weeks to wait for the effect of her new representations in London. But it soon appeared that England would never allow trade with the French islands in the West Indies and the importation of materials for ships into France. The merchants now determined to send a numerous delegation to The Hague to make known what must be done there; on December 7th, to the number of forty, they presented to the princess a violent manifesto, calling for energetic efforts to persuade England to give back the captured ships with their cargoes and for "sufficient protection for navigation over the whole world." The princess answered that it was not her fault but that of the regents opposing her in every way, that army and navy were not in a condition to do their duty; more might be heard from her councillor, De Larrey. But De Larrey could only say that the princess absolutely would approve of no increase of the navy without an increase of the army and further that there was little chance of England's return-

ing the captured vessels. Some days later the princess complained in the States-General of the tone of the delegation towards her, while she once more urged "augmentation on the land" and "equipage on the sea" in her opinion not to be separated from one another. The merchants of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, dissatisfied with the answer at court, did not stop at this, but applied to the Estates of Holland, while their address to the princess, printed in thousands of copies, spread excitement and discontent with the government of the ruler, who was blamed for everything. The negotiations with Yorke brought nothing but exasperation, resulting in a very unsatisfactory remonstrance from the English side against trade with the French possessions and in materials for ships, while there was no mention of restoring the captured ships. More and more people, even among the partisans of Orange, attributed the fault of the desperate state of affairs to the princess, whose obstinacy was generally disapproved of. She aroused anger also by her attitude in refusing to recognise the nomination sent to her for the appointment of four burgomasters at Haarlem in September, 1757. Minds were agitated further by a violent war of pamphlets concerning the character of John de Witt and his "faction," a vigorous revival of the old contest.

Complaints of the powerful court party surrounding the princess and its creatures in the provinces were not lacking; the avarice of some courtiers, the intrigues in the distribution of important places, the management of foreign affairs by the "secret council" of the princess, in which had seats again the Bentincks, De Larrey, and Fagel with Brunswick, of domestic affairs by the favourites of the princess, excited much discontent. Her attitude towards England was ascribed to the English influence prevailing around her. In general it was believed that at The Hague there were many English or



French partisans but "no Hollanders," so that English or French and not Dutch interests decided matters. Many a sharp pamphlet of this time must have left the same impression. But the constant endeavour of the government to oppose the increasing excitement could not stop the rising current of popular opinion, which in the end must inevitably lead to a war with England. Amid this violent strife of interests and intrigues, amid internal difficulties and foreign dangers menacing the republic in its prosperity and very existence the princess could scarcely hold the reins of government in her hands. Her health, having grown weaker of late years and now showing plainly symptoms of consumption, was ever less equal to the heavy task resting on her shoulders. At first she had been unwilling to consider plans for regulating the guardianship over her young son and daughter, averse as she was to coöperation with Brunswick, the person indicated in case of her death to act as governor; her friends continually warned her against the duke's ambition. But with the help of Steyn and the two Bentincks he finally succeeded in overcoming her often insulting distrust and in obtaining her full consent to the plan of Holland, prepared in 1752, for intrusting him with the general guardianship. The dreaded event could not be much longer postponed, as people saw clearly at The Hague. The princess had hardly been able to stand at the reception of the merchants and on her last visit to the Estates of Holland. In the first days of 1759, when she was preparing for the marriage of her daughter Carolina, sixteen years of age, to Prince Charles Christian of Nassau-Weilburg, major-general of the Dutch army and governor of Bergen op Zoom, and with an eye to the hereditary succession had asked the consent of the different provinces, her condition became such that all hope of improvement had to be given up. She died on January 12th, over forty-

nine years old, in her last moments committing her two children to the duke, in whom they were to find a father, and whose advice they were to follow in all things.







## CHAPTER IX

### THE REPUBLIC UNDER THE DUKE OF BRUNSWICK AND YOUNG WILLIAM V.

THE death of the princess made less impression than that of her husband. Even many partisans of the house of Orange did not regard her demise as a great loss. Her obstinacy, pride, accessibility to intrigue, and excitability threatened to throw into the scales the position of her son and of the entire stadtholdership. The party of the States, developing strength with every day, considered her death as a deliverance. The "plaintive accents" heard here and there were more utterances of sympathy for the orphaned children than laments over the loss of the "mother of the country." Now the stadtholdership had to be saved for her son. In the eyes of the stadtholder and the States parties the duke of Brunswick was the man of the hour. With great dexterity he managed to secure the favour of both parties and to preserve undiminished the stadtholder's power for the future. The guardianship over the prince nearly eleven years of age was conferred upon him as "governing guardian" by the will of the princess and by solemn resolution of the States-General under supervision of the king George II. and the old princess Maria Louisa and with the aid of a council of trustworthy Orange partisans. The office of captain-general of the union was intrusted to Brunswick without difficulty; that of admiral-general was left unfilled to the great detriment of the navy,

while the admiralties were placed under the immediate care of the States-General. Somewhat related to these matters was the marriage of Princess Carolina with the Lutheran prince of Nassau-Weilburg, who by this union would obtain for his posterity claims upon the hereditary succession. The old Frisian cabal seriously thought of elevating the princess of sixteen to be governess in order to thrust out the hated duke of Brunswick, but the intrigue was unsuccessful. In Utrecht and Holland difficulties arose concerning the prince's religion, yet they did not prevent the marriage from taking place in March, 1760. So Brunswick, though not invested with the whole power of the stadtholder, was for a time the chief personage in the republic, as he was consulted in everything as the young prince's guardian and the actual representative of the stadtholder.

The great difficulties continued, in which the republic was involved with the belligerent powers in and outside of Europe. Though convinced the old bonds with England and with his beloved Austria should be renewed, Brunswick was troubled by the losses inflicted on Dutch commerce by England in the war; towards Prussia and France he wished also a strict neutrality, knowing well that the republic was not in a condition to wage war. But the English depredations, which made impossible the once flourishing commerce with the West Indies and France, could not go on. At the entreaty of the merchants it was resolved in March, 1759, by the States-General to send an embassy to England. The embassy did not have the desired success. English privateering and searching of ships continued, and Yorke protested vigorously against the trade with the French coasts and colonies. The country must help itself, unless d'Affry's proposition was accepted to stop the wrong done to the Dutch flag with the powerful help of French vessels. On the last day of the life of the princess Holland proposed



to fit out twenty-five ships, and with great difficulty the plan was carried out. Only twenty-one vessels were made ready, but now it was at least possible to furnish a sufficient convoy, and commerce at once derived great advantage, as the English acts of violence diminished at this vigorous attitude. In the years following a like power was put forth and with a like success. The neutral position of the republic constituted it an appropriate mediator between the belligerents, who were growing weary of the war raging so terribly in Germany. After his great defeat at Kunersdorf by the united Austrian and Russian armies Frederick II. was so hard pressed that at the end of October, 1759, he requested through English intervention the duke of Brunswick to mediate. Brunswick, after consultation with Steyn, Fagel, and Bentinck, assumed the honourable task and brought the Anglo-Prussian offer of negotiation to the governments of Russia, Austria, and France, but, encouraged by their successes, they answered unfavourably in the spring of 1760. The war seemed about to extend further early in 1762 by Spain's joining France and Portugal's siding with the English, when the political horizon was cleared by the sudden death of the Russian empress Elizabeth, who was Frederick II.'s personal enemy and was succeeded by his admirer Peter III. Russia and Sweden withdrew immediately from the war, and the former allied itself with Prussia; the shameful murder of the new Russian ruler changed the outlook, but his successor Catherine II. maintained the policy of peace begun by her husband. So Austria, supported only by weak Poland and Saxony, while France had enough to do with the English war, had to accept the peace of Hubertsburg, by which it left Silesia to Prussia. The dangerous war on land thus came to an end.

The maritime war, injurious to Dutch commercial interests, developed more and more to the advantage of England

ruling the seas. After the accession of George III. in 1760 England exerted all its strength to cut down the colonial power of France and Spain. Under the management of William Pitt its fleet of over one hundred and fifty ships was everywhere victorious over the smaller French and Spanish navies; the loss of Minorca, with which the war opened in 1756, was avenged from the English side by an efficient blockade of the entire French coast and repeated attacks on French ports. In the colonies affairs were no better for the allies: Canada fell into English hands; in Hindostan Clive, as general of the English East India Company, destroyed what was left of the great French empire in India, of which Dupleix had dreamed, and in 1761 the old capital of the French power, Pondicherry, came into the enemy's possession; Senegal in Africa, Martinique, Grenada, St. Lucia, and Tobago in the West Indies went the same way. Secret discussions in Ryswick and at The Hague between French and English diplomatists, under the mediation again of Dutch statesmen, led finally to negotiations concerning a separate peace, which was brought about in February, 1763, at Paris and sealed the fall of France as a colonial and maritime power. Canada, the forts on the Ohio and the left bank of the Mississippi excepting only New Orleans, various islands in the West Indies, nearly all Senegal, French Hindostan with the exception of Pondicherry and a few small places became English territory; Spain had to give up Florida and received in return the French possessions on the right bank of the Mississippi. Thenceforth England was lord and master in North America, as well as in the Antilles, western Africa, and Hindostan. It was evident that the English sea power far surpassed that of the Dutch and also that the English colonial power was the first in the world. Woe to the republic, if it wished to renew the old rivalry and should thereby change the protecting friendship of powerful England



into enmity! The policy of the duke of Brunswick and the council pensionary Steyn aimed to preserve a good understanding with England, if possible to restore the old alliance of the maritime powers.

The Seven Years' War had for the republic evil consequences. Dutch commerce had suffered notably from the long insecurity on the sea. Dreading heavy losses, wealthy merchants retired from business and lived upon their income. After the fall of the regents' party in 1748 some of its younger members went again into trade, but many preferred dealing in money to trading in goods, and the number of banking houses in Amsterdam visibly increased. Capital, scared by the losses suffered in commerce and industry, turned more and more to investments in government securities, especially those of foreign countries, which paid a high interest. Amsterdam, formerly the seat of commerce, slowly became that of the money business, and with it speculation in stocks mastered the commercial world. In the eighteenth century requests for loans coming from all sides to Amsterdam could speedily find what was wanted. Foreign powers, from England,<sup>1</sup> France, and Austria to Russia, Denmark, Spain, Sweden, Poland, to the smallest German states, foreign princes for themselves personally, domestic and foreign companies, magistrates of city and country came to the Amsterdam Exchange to negotiate loans. Already reduced by increasing competition, Amsterdam commerce changed its character, and monetary transactions came

<sup>1</sup> Of the one hundred million pounds sterling, at which the English public debt was estimated, one quarter was in Dutch hands (Hardenbroek, *Gedenkschriften*, i., p. 217); furthermore many Netherlanders possessed stock in English companies, so that it was calculated that fifteen million pounds in interest on English indebtedness was annually collected here. See *De Koopman*, vol. iii., *passim*, and Sautijn Kluit, *De Amsterdamsche Beurs in 1763 en 1773* (Amsterdam, 1865), p. 76.

to the fore in the old commercial metropolis. The business of exchange could thrive under these circumstances, so that hundreds made considerable profits by the dangerous discounting of bills of exchange. The Jews especially went into this business energetically and showed themselves masters in it. But the old love of speculation asserted itself. As in 1720, small capitalists and rich merchants engaged in pernicious speculation on the rise and fall of "public effects." The Amsterdam Exchange was interested in the monetary transactions made necessary by the Seven Years' War in Germany, both for the military needs of the belligerents and for the payment of tribute levied on city and country. These transactions caused a gigantic expansion of the already flourishing business of exchange with Amsterdam and Hamburg as centres, which business soon, with the numerous indorsements on the bills of exchange, gave rise to an extensive jobbing in bills. Exchange on Germany and the northern kingdoms increased, so that the bills represented an amount calculated at fifteen times their actual value, without the funds for payment being in the possession of the drawers. This went well, so long as there was no settlement and money flowed abundantly, but must bring trouble in the end, and in the spring of 1763, when settlements were in progress after the peace, rumours were rife of failures to be expected in Amsterdam, Hamburg, and other cities. The great house of De Neufville in Amsterdam, long a pillar of the Exchange but deeply involved in bill jobbing and stock speculation, failed suddenly on July 25th with liabilities of nearly three millions and dragged down some fifty other houses. This hard blow to credit was felt immediately in Hamburg, where almost a hundred firms had to suspend payment and the bank was closed for a time. Not until September did the Hamburg Exchange recover from the shock, which had effected also Stockholm, Copenhagen, Berlin, and Leipzig. Fearing a



general financial crisis, the governments considered matters, and Frederick II. urged upon the States-General a speedy settlement at Amsterdam in order to save the house of De Neufville from ruin. But the States-General were unwilling to interfere in the "wind business," and the Estates of Holland let strict law take its course. The Amsterdam panic of August and September, 1763, which had left unharmed almost no important business house, slowly came to an end in the autumn. What had happened brought out a whole series of pamphlets, crowding the bookstalls and directed mainly against the bankrupts and against the Jews, who were thought guilty of having produced the crisis. A year later De Neufville promised to pay sixty per cent., and the house, suspected but envied on account of its great operations, was rehabilitated.

This all brought the duke of Brunswick into difficulties, and no less trouble was caused him by the French ambassador's intrigues with some members of the government. Onno Zwier van Haren and Gronsfelt were intimate with d'Affry, and the latter acknowledges that Gronsfelt offered to sell himself for ten thousand livres, while Van Haren secretly deliberated with the French ambassador to combat the influence of the hated duke. But the Frisian statesman's far from brilliant part was soon played to an end. A wretched family history, casting an indelible stain upon his moral character, became the means of removing him from The Hague and the government. To escape criminal prosecution he retired to his Frisian estates, where he lived for years and sought consolation in poetry. With him fell in the most shameful way the Frisian "cabal," which had obstructed first Bentinck and then the duke. Grovestins, Van der Mieden, and other members of the old Frisian party were thrust aside or removed from court. The victorious duke, supported by Steyn, Bentinck, and Fagel, successfully op-

posed elsewhere efforts to deprive him of his place. He succeeded in regulating his relation to the powerful government of Amsterdam in a manner satisfactory to both parties by acceding as much as possible to the wishes and needs of commerce and by leaving the Amsterdam regents free in their actions. Slowly the duke managed everywhere in the cities and provinces of the republic to play factions and leagues against one another and to place in the chief offices a number of his trusted adherents, who remained in correspondence with him and warned him of any impending danger. So he continued to have the guidance of the young prince and, not letting him out of sight, by great care for his mental and bodily welfare, by economic management of his finances, he won the thanks of all qualified to judge him. Whatever may have been asserted later by the duke's enemies, there is no doubt but that such talk must be branded as calumny, although it is true that the prince, in consequence of the duke's constant supervision, learned more and more to see only through his eyes. From the diaries and correspondence of the duke it appears that the young prince received a careful education which, however, could not remove the defects of his character, that later came out plainly, any more than it could make up for his lack of intellect by a superabundance of knowledge. But the duke succeeded at least in gaining the good-will of the partisans of the States. When the young prince himself assumed the government on March 8, 1766, the duke stood in high favour with the regents. It rained thanks for his inestimable services, for his fatherly care which it was hoped might be continued for the country. The States-General, the council of state, the provincial Estates exhausted themselves in testimonials of gratitude, manifesting it also in considerable presents in money, to the amount of over six hundred thousand guilders, which came in very opportunely for his heavy debts.



The system of government followed by the duke of Brunswick was after his retirement from the guardianship of the minor prince taken over by the latter without change. The hereditary stadtholder dignities, which William IV. had possessed, now went to his son. Not independent of judgment, this becoming worse by his reserve and obstinacy, with slight love of work and little insight into the great interests of state, while he had his eyes wide open for details, much attached to his prerogatives, simple, friendly, and inspired with the best intentions, but without "nerve in his soul," William V. in his own estimation was not the man to take up with a firm grasp the necessary reform of the state begun by his father. From fear of influences that might act on the young prince, soon after he became of age and apparently at the instigation of the duke, who had promised to remain in the country, a measure of importance was taken with the object of keeping affairs in the direction entered upon from the beginning of the duke's regency. And the young prince, mindful of the wishes expressed by both his parents on their deathbed, grateful for the fatherly cares of him who had guided his youth, was readily induced to approve this measure. Thus arose the "act of consultation" of May 3, 1766, by which the duke bound himself to assist the prince by word and deed in the conduct of the affairs of the military and all the other departments of the government. The document, signed by both the contracting parties and solemnly sworn to by Brunswick, was officially subscribed by the secretary De Larrey. Fagel and the Delft pensionary Van Bleiswijk were chiefly instrumental in drawing up the document. Only a few trusted men, as Bentinck and Steyn, were informed of the matter, which otherwise remained a deep secret. So the duke's influence upon the course of affairs in the republic continued, and the vicious system of government was established for an

indefinite period, as it had been developed since William IV. and particularly about 1760. Under William V. also the government of the republic was one of intrigue, selfishness, and secret understanding between the hereditary stadtholder and his avaricious creatures in city and country, who managed municipal and provincial interests and distributed offices at their own will. A fatal system was this that finally was to bring the republic into a decline. The chief counterpoise to the stadtholder's power was the independent government of Amsterdam, supported by other cities; so long as the stadtholder respected the interests of these cities and their regents, he could rule as he pleased. No such stadtholder's council as Bentinck had suggested was formed. Fearing its influence, Brunswick would not consent to it, and the prince agreed; he believed affairs might be settled with the regular officials: the council pensionary, the clerk, the treasurer-general, and the secretary of the council of state, each of whom he could consult separately. The prince, who followed no rules in his labours and often threw state documents aside for days in order to enjoy himself, did not work regularly with them, gave them his advice instead of asking theirs, and left the rest to them, thus putting all the responsibility upon himself. In the first years the duke was the only constant adviser, whose advice was generally followed, and whose influence behind the scenes was no longer contested, although dissatisfaction began speedily to spread among the citizens. When Steyn died in 1772, the duke replaced him by his creature, the vacillating but ambitious Van Bleiswijk, who promised to be a willing tool in his hands. The duke looked out that nobody around the prince should rise up against him and thus held the prince in subjection.

The high-minded and vain Bentinck was vexed to see himself shoved aside. The man, who had been in 1747



the restorer of the stadtholder's authority, now became its opponent. But it went no further than personal wrangling and unpleasantness, which embittered still more the old statesman's life, saddened by financial and domestic difficulties, until death in October, 1774, relieved the duke of this enemy. His brother, Charles Bentinck, influential under William IV., belonged among the duke's adversaries and was banished from the prince's presence. So the duke of Brunswick remained actually the leader of the government in the republic, even now when the prince was reputed to reign. With great care he considered the delicate affair of a marriage to be contracted by the prince; English, Danish, Brunswick princesses were mentioned, finally the young princess Frederika Sophia Wilhelmina of Prussia, the beloved niece of Frederick II., her mother being a Brunswick princess and the duke's sister. Frederick II. repeatedly sounded the duke concerning this marriage, and the latter consented, knowing well how unpopular another English marriage would be. The princess, scarcely sixteen years old, vivacious, energetic, excellently educated, intelligent, and amiable, was united to the stadtholder in October, 1767, and came a month later amid general rejoicing to The Hague, where she at first kept in the background but quickly became tired of the duke's domination. The Prussian lady von Dankelmann was sent with her by her royal uncle in order to counsel the inexperienced girl and to protect her from Brunswick's influence, which brought down Brunswick's hatred upon the lady. During the first years the princess refrained from any hostile action against the duke. The marriage with a "royal" princess of the now high house of Hohenzollern seemed to increase the prestige of the house of Orange, and in 1768 there was serious thought of distinguishing the prince by a higher official title and of securing to him as "royal highness" the rank of his mother and his

wife. This, however, was not accomplished. The brilliancy of the court at The Hague was second to none in Europe, and the birth of a princess in 1770, soon followed by two princes, assured the future of the family actually ruling over the republic.

The first years of Prince William V.'s reign passed without disturbance. Peace prevailing everywhere favoured the development of commerce and industry. The credit of the state, temporarily shocked by the panic of 1763, was only slightly assailed by a similar one of ten years later, when speculation in the stock of the English East India Company in consequence of the brilliant victories of the company under Clive in Hindostan brought about bankruptcies first in London and then at Amsterdam. The sudden failure of the old house of Clifford in Amsterdam towards New Year's of 1773, dragging down other houses, was mainly the result of excessive speculation, which had many victims among the small capitalists but was finally checked by coöperation between the bank and government of Amsterdam. There were some difficulties and dissensions, which had to be settled by the intervention of the young stadtholder, but they were not of a serious nature. That the condition of the country about 1770 might be called not unfavourable, at least for the upper classes, appeared from the growth of commerce in the new period of peace and from the foundation of a number of learned societies for the study of literature and natural sciences, as well as from the drainage undertaken in the country of South Holland. More attention than ever was devoted to the care of the rivers under the guidance of the Leyden professor Lulofs, inspector of the country's streams.

There was a pressing need of improving conditions in the navy, and at the end of 1767 the prince in presenting the petition to the States-General called attention to the extremely small number of ships of war. He urged



the carrying out of previous resolutions for the construction and equipment of twenty-five ships to be prepared for all contingencies. But the refusals of the provinces afforded slight hope for the accomplishment of these wishes, though the prince repeated them year after year. The Estates of Holland in February, 1771, declared that the navy was near ruin, if measures were not immediately taken for building ships and furnishing money to the admiralties; otherwise the name of maritime power would become for the republic a "mere title." The council of state in April presented a plan for the building of twenty-four heavy ships of the line. Thus some sort of an appearance might be made with the sixty-six weaker vessels, which were still in service, though some of them were thirty or forty years old and hardly seaworthy. What a poor showing was this in comparison with the British navy, counting nearly three hundred ships with one hundred thousand men, or with the French fleet of over two hundred ships! But action did not yet come. The four millions required for building gave rise to endless discussions in most of the provinces; not until 1778, after six years, was the proposition finally accepted. Then, however, it was too late.

New difficulties with England began. Its American colonies, much developed since the peace of Utrecht and grown to a connected territory on the eastern coast of North America with a million and a half of white inhabitants and hundreds of thousands of slaves, had become still more powerful in consequence of the favourable course of the naval war with France and Spain. Their white population possessed a great feeling of independence, being the descendants largely of English, Dutch, French, German emigrants, who had left their country on account of religion, in the south of Spanish emigrants coming as early as the sixteenth century for other reasons, and having been steeled in the continuous

wars against the Indians. The northern colonies of English and Dutch ancestry presented a peculiar, almost national type, which was distinguished as essentially "American." The commerce of Boston and New York upon their own coast and in the West Indies, the rice, tobacco, and indigo plantations of Carolina and Maryland, the agriculture of Pennsylvania flourished and diffused prosperity and wealth; civilisation and science began to develop, not least at the universities founded in the seventeenth century, and the name of the great Benjamin Franklin resounded in Europe. This energetic population, further increased in importance through the annexation of the former French possessions, had serious grievances against the way, in which its interests were subordinated to those of the mother country in Europe. The English navigation laws, notably the old Navigation Act, which bound its import and export trade to the motherland and prohibited the use of other than English vessels, the accompanying strict customs regulations, by which American commerce and industry remained entirely dependent on the English, had repeatedly caused troubles, some proceeding from the smuggling with the Antilles as the point of departure. Now came, in 1765, an attempt, by the introduction of a stamp tax and more vigorous enforcement of the customs regulations, to make the colonies share more in the burdens of the mother country, which was suffering from the financial consequences of the last naval war waged for the great benefit of the American colonies. The Americans protested against this taxation without their consent, repugnant to the dearest traditions of the English and Dutch citizen. Their representative in London, Franklin himself, emphasised the fact that the colonies had no seat in the Parliament imposing this tax. During eight years they protested vehemently against this colonial policy, feeling more and more united in opposition to the mother



country, and under the lead of such men as Franklin, John Adams, George Washington, Patrick Henry exhausting all lawful means to demonstrate their right. But the English government, no longer guided by Pitt and his Whigs but by the Tories, did not comprehend the importance of the ever-increasing revolt. When it finally gave way somewhat to the pressure of the liberal opposition and repealed the duties introduced with the exception of that upon tea, just this tax became the cause of a tumult at Boston, where disguised colonists threw the cargoes of tea overboard into the harbour, while in other ports the tea could not be disembarked or rotted in the warehouses. The English government now resolved to adopt vigorous measures and sent troops to America, whereupon the American colonists took up arms and in September, 1774, called together a congress at Philadelphia. Twelve colonies were represented there; they determined to maintain their rights and for a time to suspend all commerce with England. In the following spring the English troops at Lexington attacked the insurgent volunteers of Massachusetts, and thus began the American uprising against English tyranny, soon under the lead of Washington as chief commander in the name of the congress representing all thirteen states. England sent out armies and fleets to constrain the colonies to obedience, while the latter did not stop at opposition but declared themselves independent on July 4, 1776. From the beginning divided among themselves by the resistance of many colonists attached to England and not equipped with the means for waging a great war, the colonies suffered in the first years, notwithstanding the brilliant leadership of Washington and his friends, severe defeats, which were only atoned for in part by a few victories.

The course of these affairs was followed in Europe with great interest, especially in France, where it was

hoped to take away the harm of the defeat suffered in the Seven Years' War. In the republic also there was interest, where people, mindful of their own revolt against Spain, felt sympathy for the new republican state and hoped to see a blow inflicted on the power of the formidable competitor, still regarded by many as the arch-enemy across the North Sea in spite of a century of friendship. In both countries was the desire for profitable commercial relations with the rich American provinces, hitherto accessible only to English merchants and smugglers. The danger of England's supremacy on the sea seemed as threatening to the independence of other nations as that formerly of Spain or France on the land. France secretly aided the insurgents with money, arms, and clothing, and the young Marquis de Lafayette with a number of volunteers embarked for America amid the plaudits of all France. Franklin, now settled at Passy near Paris, was commissioned by the American Congress to negotiate an alliance, which was concluded on February 6, 1778, between France and the United States and was completed in the following year by the accession of Spain. The war in Europe actually begun, though without any declaration of war, compelled England to keep an eye on its coasts and commercial interests and had a decisive influence upon the course of the war in America; it gave Washington and his men new courage, aroused further by the appearance of a French auxiliary corps in America and a Franco-Spanish fleet in the Antilles; it paralysed also the activity of the insufficient English force in the colonies. Washington, whose army in 1777 was almost disbanded by want of money and bad organisation, was soon on the Hudson again, and his generals pushed the English into the southern ports. What attitude was the republic to take? Should it again remain neutral as in the maritime war? Should it give ear to English entreaty and come to the



help of the old ally? Or should it, ardent for the new resistance to tyranny and desirous of opening new roads for commerce, join America, France, and Spain, and help inflict a telling blow upon its redoubtable rival in the world's market? These questions occupied its entire population, which watched the struggle across the ocean with lively interest and great sympathy for the enemies of its old enemy and submitted unwillingly to the cautious policy of the government striving for neutrality as in the last war.

Since the end of the sixteenth century the Scotch brigade<sup>1</sup> had been in the Dutch service, a corps recruited mostly from Scotland and commanded by Scottish officers. On account of the great need of troops for the war in America, the English king late in 1775 requested the republic through the stadtholder to lend him this brigade, recruited from his own subjects and numbering about one thousand men. The prince in November presented this request to the States-General, which made the provinces acquainted with it, and it produced great agitation. The weak advisers of the prince shrank from the responsibility, and, though four provinces had consented, the matter was put aside by the prince in the spring with the answer that such a loan of troops seemed possible, if they were to be used in Europe only, provided England would replace them with German troops. England did not revert to the subject, and not unfounded appeared Brunswick's supposition that England had merely aimed to put an end to the enlistment of Scottish troops in the Dutch service. Soon came other troubles of a more serious nature to augment the difficulties. The Antilles became again the scene of a trade in contraband on a large scale, the more so as these islands had commercial relations with the English colonies on the American coast, whence they obtained their wood and provisions,

<sup>1</sup> See *The Scot's Brigade in Holland* (Edinb., 1899), ii., p. 468.

and where they brought their products to market, so far as the strict English trade regulations allowed. The Dutch islands of St. Eustatius and Curaçao were the centre of this trade, and the former in particular experienced prosperous times, having been hitherto<sup>1</sup> an insignificant bald rock, which might now be called a "magazine for all the nations of the earth." The population increased constantly; hundreds of merchants settled there; it was visited by many ships, sailing to and from the English and French colonies, in 1778-1779 by more than three thousand. The governor of the island, Heyliger, had to be replaced in September, 1776, at the demand of England, but his successor, the energetic De Graeff, was no more desirous of pleasing the English, and smuggling continued unchecked at St. Eustatius. There on November 16, 1776, the new American flag was saluted by the newly appointed Dutch governor with the firing of cannon and was treated as that of an independent power on all the ships of the rebels. This virtual recognition awakened the just anger of England, and Yorke in February presented a strong protest with a demand for the dismissal also of this governor. Yorke expressed himself still more violently in his interview with the prince, the duke, and the council pensionary. The duke, well disposed towards England, was indignant at the conduct of the English ambassador, whose violent language had often hindered him. He desired "manly firmness" in opposition to Yorke. The States-General complained of the tone of the protest, acknowledged the obligation to watch against the transportation of contraband, and summoned De Graeff home to vindicate himself, although he, alleging sickness, was soon able to return to his station. So St. Eustatius remained the smuggling centre, the rendezvous of everything the rebels needed,

<sup>1</sup> Jameson, *St. Eustatius in the American Revolution* (*North American Review*, July, 1903, p. 683).



the staple of their own products; this trade was continued on the appearance of a Franco-Spanish squadron in the Antilles despite the sharp complaints of Yorke. But this affair did not bring about war; for some years St. Eustatius was the "Tyre" of the Antilles, as Burke called it, the rich "mine of fortune" for Dutch and American, even for British merchants, who did not hesitate to seek gain wherever it was to be found.

Everything showed that the unpleasant relation between England and the republic of the early years of the Seven Years' War had sprung up again and that public opinion in the republic had turned more sharply than ever against the old ally. A number of pamphlets advocated joining France, Spain, and America; others, like the "letters" of the learned count of Nassau—La Lecq, a descendant of Prince Maurice, were limited more to proving the justice of the American cause. Sympathy was felt with the democratic spirit that raised its head in England and moved minds in America. The ideas of Montesquieu and of the French philosophers had here exerted some influence in this direction. Influential among the numerous students of French literature was Rousseau's book *Le contrat social*, which in 1762 brought to the front again the old notion, developed also by Hugo de Groot, of a government by agreement, the people originally transferring the power to the magistrates. The ideas of the English democrats worked more strongly upon the Overijssel regent, Joan Derk van der Capellen tot den Poll, and his friends. Richard Price's work, *Observations on civil liberty*, translated by Van der Capellen, and his idealistic *Observations on the importance of the American Revolution and the means of making it a benefit to the world* were eagerly read in Holland; Van der Capellen was in correspondence with him and other Englishmen friendly to America. Priestley's philosophical-theological views were immediately

translated and perused. The new ideas found devoted adherents not least in the circles of the Mennonites, Remonstrants, and Catholics thrust aside by the ruling Reformed Church. In this popular movement they saw the means of freeing themselves from the ecclesiastical as well as the aristocratical yoke. Sympathy with the American insurgents was the feeling now prevailing over everything. Amsterdam's commerce, hoping for a profitable trade with the former English colonies, had its eye on America and readily seconded Van der Capellen's designs. People looked also to France, the powerful ally of the American rebels, which wished for nothing better than to act with the republic against the old enemy across the Channel and the North Sea. Of great importance was the sending as ambassador to The Hague of the diplomatist Paul François de Quelen, Duke de la Vauguyon (December, 1776). He was the man to induce the country to give up the anxiously desired neutrality and to throw itself into the arms of France. With friendly words to the regents of the Dutch cities, of Amsterdam especially, with threats, if necessary, against the stadtholder, suspected of English leanings, and the weak council pensionary, de la Vauguyon expected to attain his purpose.

With the attitude of France the menace of war made an increase of the navy urgently necessary. The States-General were brought to hesitating action by the demands of Holland, which pleaded for the building of the twenty-four ships of the line long since spoken of and threatened, in case of refusal, to disband some of the troops in its pay in order to enable the admiralties to build. In 1777 Van Bylandt with a squadron was sent westwards to hold the English privateers in check, and in May, 1778, the proposition made six years before by the prince and council of state was finally accepted. But "resolved" war-ships were not war-ships at sea; though



some of these ships soon lay ready, they did not yet sail out as convoys. Into the negotiations with England, concerning the terms, on which this power would allow trade in the west, a new element had entered since France's declaration of war. Both France and the Americans endeavoured secretly to persuade the republic to an open alliance of commerce and friendship with the new United States. The first letter of the American representatives in Paris, Franklin, Lee, and Deane, was written in April to the council pensionary, but he merely sent the request privately to the cities of Holland. Amsterdam, however, went further and, in expectation of England's recognition of the independence of the "United States of America," had its pensionary reply secretly to the letter of the Americans that, as soon as this recognition had come to pass, it would coöperate in a treaty of perpetual amity and commerce. One of the merchants consulted by the Amsterdam government, Jean de Neufville, who did a great trade with America, had in conjunction with the Amsterdam burgomasters on September 4th at Aix-la-Chapelle drawn up with Lee a secret treaty, which must assure to the republic on its recognition an advantageous treaty of commerce. Yorke had heard enough of Amsterdam's sentiments to warn his government that it was quite time to influence vigorously the prince and Brunswick, while the wavering Van Bleiswijk would give no serious trouble. In order to satisfy the English government somewhat, and to do something for commerce, obstructed by English privateers and war-ships, Van Bleiswijk in the States-General proposed the expedient suggested by England of giving convoy to the threatened merchantmen, but excepting those which were laden with masts and wood suitable for building ships of war. Amsterdam declared against this "limited convoy." The merchants, fearing they could not dispose of the wood they had purchased, re-

requested a hearing from the prince, as their predecessors had applied to the princess in 1758 during the naval war, and expressed themselves strongly against the English, making the prince personally responsible for the consequences of a refusal to grant unlimited convoy. The perplexed prince answered generally that he took the matter to heart, that the petition for 1779 called for thirty-two ships, and that an effort would be made to give satisfaction to commerce. Two days later (November 13, 1778) the States-General resolved to grant limited convoy, Amsterdam vehemently protesting.

While difficulties increased on the sea, clouds began to accumulate also upon the land. The death of the elector of Bavaria at the end of 1777 seemed about to cause another great war between Austria, which hoped to bring the Bavarian hereditary lands under its influence, and Prussia, which feared so considerable an augmentation of the Austrian power. The Prussian armies invaded Bohemia, but the intervention of France and Russia prevented the threatening war, and the peace of Teschen (May, 1779) put an end to the danger. The election of Archduke Maximilian, brother of the German emperor Joseph II., as coadjutor and future successor of the archbishop of Cologne, portended new troubles, as the young emperor was already thinking of an exchange of territory with the new Bavarian ruler, the latter to obtain the southern Netherlands in return for his electorate. In these circumstances it appeared advisable to increase both the army and the navy of the republic. The council of state after consulting the prince proposed in the spring of 1778 to enlarge the army by nearly fourteen thousand men. But Amsterdam, dreading a postponement of the increase of the navy more necessary in its opinion, opposed this plan vigorously. The old game commenced again: the land provinces desired a larger army, Amsterdam wished only for a stronger navy.



Now matters were more favourable, as not the province of Holland but Amsterdam alone opposed providing for both, and the other provinces were not unwilling to strengthen also the navy. Amsterdam, however, could count upon the powerful support of France. De la Vauguyon presented, on December 7th, a sharp representation for the maintenance of complete freedom of trade, threatening a withdrawal by France of the commercial privileges allowed to neutrals. A few days later he came with a memoir urging the repeal of the resolution concerning convoy. The States-General answered that the resolution aimed to uphold perfect neutrality, and appealed to the fairness of France. De la Vauguyon declined to accept this answer and announced that he had in his hands an ordinance limiting the republic's trade with his country. On January 18th the States-General maintained their resolution, but de la Vauguyon immediately proclaimed the edict, and several cities of Holland now began to hesitate. Holland, left to the intrigues of de la Vauguyon and Amsterdam, changed its mind on March 30th and declared for unlimited convoy.

Matters became worse, when England showed itself dissatisfied with the resolution giving limited convoy, and went on capturing ships with contraband, even meditating a declaration of war upon the inconstant republic, now that it was far from ready for war. An immediate declaration of war might have thrown most of the Dutch colonies into English hands, while the Dutch navy was insignificant compared with that of England. Seriously wounded in America, England feared that the republic would give itself over entirely to France. It decided to wait, and declared it would permit no carrying of contraband, not even under convoy. France did not sit still. At once it rewarded Amsterdam and Haarlem by exempting them from the edict; in June,

when Holland demanded of the States-General a repeal of the resolution within four weeks, it recompensed this province by suspending there the edict. Thus was friendship with France profitable. The government of the republic knew not what to do, having no statesman of importance, now that Brunswick was falling into the background, and the prince was in despair over the "mad" English policy that made all concessions impossible. The four weeks went by, and nothing happened. Not until the last days of 1779, in accordance with a resolution of the States-General of November 8th for the formation of a convoy, could Van Bylandt sail from Texel with five war-ships for the protection of a fleet of merchantmen; no ships carrying timber could be in it, consequently Holland was opposed. Throughout the whole year the matter of limited or unlimited convoy remained in suspense. The French ambassador and his Amsterdam allies took pains to win over the smaller cities of Holland to their side. But Yorke bestirred himself also. After the official declaration of war of France and Spain had been received in June by England, he asked, on account of the approach of a Franco-Spanish fleet to Plymouth, for help from the republic by virtue of the old treaties. The Dutch government was hard pressed and found no expedient but to defer its answer as long as possible. England seemed to have brought up the subject merely to embarrass the republic, for it did not push through its demand. The coming of the noted American privateer John Paul Jones in October to Texel with some prizes gave new life but also new difficulties to the pending questions. England demanded the sending away of the privateer and the surrender of his prizes, but Jones declared he was no privateer but an officer of the American navy, continued at Texel, sold his booty, and repeatedly visited Amsterdam and The Hague, being everywhere received as a hero and ally.



Jones remained at Texel three months, and when the States-General ordered his departure, he hoisted the French flag and showed a French commission granted him by de la Vauguyon. Meanwhile England, as if inviting to war, went on searching and capturing unprotected Dutch ships. The question was what it would do with the merchantmen escorted by Van Bylandt. When they (December 31st) were off Wight, they were held up by a strong squadron under Fielding. After negotiation and refusal by Van Bylandt, Fielding began to search the merchantmen; this produced a skirmish, and the Dutch admiral suspended the fight against a superior force and struck his flag. Fielding took possession of the merchantmen and sailed with them and Van Bylandt's ships to Portsmouth, where Van Bylandt reported what had occurred. There was great excitement in the country. Not only was Van Bylandt accused of neglect of duty, but the prince also of being an accessory; indemnity and satisfaction were demanded for the insult to the flag on the country's war-ships; vigorous action was called for against the arrogant Briton, who made all commerce impossible. While this matter was still unsettled, England declared (January 28, 1780) that it would soon be obliged to abrogate the commercial treaty of 1674, if the republic persisted in its unwillingness to obey the 1678 treaty of mutual help by sending troops and ships. England would treat the republic no longer as an ally but simply as a neutral power, withdrawing all commercial advantages. War seemed to be at the door. The French policy was master of the situation, when two months later Yorke requested a decision within three weeks and on April 17th the English threat of repealing commercial advantages was carried out. The prince and the council pensionary were now forced to follow the stream, and they yielded to the majority of Holland led by Amsterdam. Not only was Van Bylandt

brought before a council of war, but the States-General resolved upon a protest at London and upon a demand for indemnity on account of the seizure; they resolved (April 24th) to grant unlimited convoy and some days later to fit out fifty-two ships of the line and frigates, two-thirds of them being ready in October. When the convoys sailed out, a collision might be expected that would bring about war, unless England, as in 1762, recoiled before the republic's more vigorous attitude.

There was one more chance of peace. The Russian empress, Catherine II., desired to mediate between the belligerents in western Europe and in any case not to let the rise of her mercantile fleet be endangered by the oppressive maritime supremacy of powerful England. In the line of her ideas was an often discussed alliance of the neutral powers: Russia, Denmark, Sweden, also the republic, and perhaps Austria, Prussia, Portugal, and Naples, for the maintenance of an "Armed Neutrality." France favoured this, having in 1778 adopted the rule of "free ships, free goods" advocated by the minister Vergennes. After the capture of a Russian ship by the Spaniards the empress on March 9, 1780, drew up five articles, which she wished to see approved by the neutral powers. They embraced the following points: free coast navigation for neutrals; free ships, free goods except for contraband; arms, powder, and lead are contraband; a blockade must be effective to be valid; prize courts and admiralties must adhere to these stipulations. The republic, solicited by the Russian ambassador Galitzin, hoped to gain time, to find help in an alliance of neutrals, to keep matters open for peace. In April Russia asked the republic to join the proposed alliance, but the summer passed without the republic's consent. Further delay was caused by the request of the States that the alliance should guarantee their possessions beyond the sea. The Russian empress seemed averse to such a guarantee, and



so the alliance remained in suspense, though Amsterdam urged the signing of the Russian articles. But while in October, 1780, the affair had gone no further, an event occurred that changed the Dutch attitude towards England. On a vessel captured by an English frigate off Newfoundland (September 10th), upon which vessel was the American statesman Henry Laurens with an authorisation to conclude a treaty with the republic, the text was found of the treaty drawn up at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1778, proof of the complicity of the Amsterdam government in the secret negotiations with the American rebels, and a number of letters from the correspondence between Americans and Amsterdam merchants and regents including Van der Capellen. The English government made the most of this capture. Yorke showed extreme anger and on October 16th placed the discovered papers before the prince, hoping at the eleventh hour to prevent adhesion to the Russian plan. The prince hesitated some days, and Amsterdam already informed made use of them to carry through the Estates of Holland an acceptance of the alliance without a guarantee of the colonies. Holland's resolution was approved in the other provinces, as Amsterdam justified its conduct of 1778 by declaring that the treaty at Aix-la-Chapelle was drawn up under the influence of a rumour that England was about to conclude peace with America and to recognise the independence of the rebels, provided Dutch commerce with America was not allowed. On November 20th the States-General joined the alliance under protest of Zealand, Utrecht, and Gelderland. A few days later Amsterdam's conduct was disavowed by Holland and the States-General. This was in response to a complaint, presented on November 10th by Yorke, of the culpable plan of a faction or cabal. A new representation by Yorke on December 12th demanded exemplary punishment and complete satisfaction for the insult, and threatened to have the

punishment inflicted by the English, if the States declined. Three days later Yorke came to demand an immediate answer in terms that seemed chosen to bring about war. The request for help for England was also made again. On the 10th immediate announcement of the republic's adhesion to the alliance of Armed Neutrality was resolved upon, the ambassador at London, Van Welderen, to be given the authority in the vain hope of preventing a declaration of war by England. But the English government recalled Yorke at once, refused to listen to Van Welderen, and drew up the declaration of war. It was aided by the fact that the sea was just then tempestuous and disturbed communication between London and The Hague, so that, while the declaration of war dated from December 20th, the packet for Van Welderen with the declaration of neutrality arrived too late and did not have to be accepted by England. Holland's resolution to put the affair of the Laurens papers in the hands of the Provincial Court was of December 21st, consequently too late to satisfy England. On the 23d Yorke left The Hague by command of his government. Four days later the English war manifesto reached there. War had broken out, and the French statesmen rejoiced at the success of their plan.

In all this the prince's reputation had suffered very much. It was plain that not he but Amsterdam and the Holland majority, or rather the French ambassador, now had in hand the management of the republic's affairs. But he was blamed for all that occurred. The son of an English princess, he was suspected of favouring England. The weakness in face of the brutal English demands and the delay in joining the northern alliance were attributed to his unwillingness, to his aversion to France. He was reproached for the unsatisfactory state of the navy and the insult to the Dutch flag in the Van Bylandt affair. The prince's personal consideration had dwindled



greatly: his childishness, obstinacy, carelessness, helplessness, and vacillation excited justifiable anger in his nearest friends. In opposition to him, whom many proclaimed a "rascal" and "traitor," the party of Van der Capellen, Van Berckel, and the Amsterdam regents working with the French ambassador boasted of their "patriotic" sentiments. The baron and his friends were more and more embittered against the prince and his followers. Thus a nucleus of discontent was formed in the country, that was directed first against the hereditary stadtholder's person, but soon against the hereditary stadtholdership itself. The Holland pensionaries De Gyselaer, Zeebergh, and especially Van Berckel, detested by the prince as his worst enemy, the Amsterdam regents and Van der Capellen and his friends, all supported by the French ambassador, were ever on the watch to thwart the prince. And among the high government officials the latter found nobody to give him the help so necessary to him. Whoever could look beneath the surface knew well that corruption and fraud, selfishness and intrigue, incompetence and ignorance prevailed everywhere, and that the government was really no better than it had been before 1747—a combination of institutions based upon the supremacy of a few at the expense of the many. Some of the prince's friends said that it could not go on so much longer and that within a few years a "notable revolution" must come to pass. Great dangers, at home and abroad, threatened the disabled and helpless state of the United Netherlands, which like a wrecked ship drifted over the waves without rudder and without helmsman, a prey to all the storms and winds. There was no one at this time, who could act as steersman. Frederick the Great wrote—"There is no head in Holland." This was quite true, now that Brunswick, who at least knew what he wanted, had stepped into the background, and the energetic but inexperienced princess did not interfere

in order to spare her husband's feelings. No guidance could come from any of the interested adherents of the prince, who satisfied his favourites with pensions and fat offices. Neither could it come from the chiefs of the opposing party. So the republic had to enter upon a dangerous war with the most powerful state of the world without leading, without a leader.







## CHAPTER X

### FORERUNNERS OF THE NEW TIME

AT the very moment that the republic was involved in this serious war, it found itself likewise at the beginning of a general social crisis. It was not merely affairs of foreign and domestic policy that divided its population into parties. Economic and intellectual questions also came up and agitated men's minds. With the new ideas spread over Europe by French and English writers there was felt among a portion of the Dutch people a need of renewal, reform, regeneration. Cultivated men asked what were their obligations towards human society. The defects were considered not only of the government but also of literature and science, of education and church, of commerce and industry. It was felt that an account must be rendered of the attitude towards the new ideas, the new time that seemed to have arrived for the civilised world. Nowhere in Europe, not even in France which was soon to stir up the world with its Revolution, did these new ideas assume fixed forms as early as in the Netherlands. Among the middle classes, held in subordination by the regents during two centuries, the necessity was felt of freedom, of recognition of their importance; the lower classes, intellectually and economically under age, were little accessible to such ideas and would be dragged along wherever circumstances led. Encouraged by the example of the new state in America, guided by French and English philos-

ophers and economists, Voltaire, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and the Encyclopedists, Hume, Price, and Priestley, towards a renovation of state and society, the middle classes became more conscious of their real power and strove to secure its recognition. Here is plainly to be noted a strife of classes. The middle classes, the strength of the nation, had long been content with the elevation of some of their best elements to a share in the government of the republic. Now and then they had violently asserted themselves and sought a counterpoise to the arbitrary rule of the regents in a prince of the beloved Orange family. Their prosperity had steadily increased, and were they longer to be satisfied with the crumbs thrown to them by the covetous patricians? Their guides in philosophy and law gave the answer to this question, and they began to see its meaning plainly. Many beheld the signs of the times with anxiety. Attached to the past by strong ties of interest, they would not hear to any change in the institutions ordained by "God's wise direction." They had a deep horror of the French "atheists," the frivolous preachers of a philosophy that in their opinion was at variance with the biblical institutions given by God himself to man. Thus were felt here also the two opposing tendencies of all times, the desire for change, improvement, and renewal, against that for conservation and strengthening of whatever existed. A crisis was approaching, in importance to be compared only with that which these provinces had known in the days of the republic's birth, of the revolt against Spain.

About 1760, precursors of the storm might be observed, particularly in ecclesiastical matters. The ideas of moderation in religion, prevalent in the first half of the century, penetrated ever deeper among the regents as well as among the common people. Powerful was the influence of foreign philosophy, particularly that of the



English deist John Locke, whose *Essay on human understanding* (1690) assumed as the basis of knowledge no innate ideas but sensation or reflection and set up experience as the source of knowing. The learned Remonstrant professor Jean Leclerc and the celebrated naturalist 's Gravesande were the chief Dutch propagators of this philosophy, which was spread also by Bolingbroke's writings. The master of modern French philosophy, the aged Voltaire, who had repeatedly visited the republic and counted many friends there, had an important influence upon the thought of cultivated Dutch people not only by his classic dramas but also by his philosophical works. His *Traité sur la tolérance*, translated in 1764, made a deep impression, not least on many preachers, and especially on Remonstrants and Mennonites always inclined to freedom of thought. Rousseau's *Contrat social*, appearing in 1762, and other writings of his found admirers of his "honest" mind and brilliant style—Betje Wolff calls him "the great, excellently good Rousseau." Already the ministers of the old church looked on with vexation at the progress of these ideas, and they vigorously opposed the "Voltairean" tendencies. They asked and obtained from the Estates of Friesland—the translation of Voltaire's work having appeared at Leeuwarden—the prohibition of this book "attacking the faith with its mockery."<sup>1</sup> But this prohibition had not the desired result, for as usual it drew more attention to the prohibited book, notwithstanding the dissatisfaction in moderate circles with the author's frivolous tone in ridiculing all revelation, which seemed to give to his toleration the character of indifference to or hatred of revelation. Soon was published the translation of another work, that angered the orthodox preachers, of Marmontel's *Bélisaire* in 1768. On account of the principles of "natural religion," the praise of toleration, the

<sup>1</sup> Hartog, *Uit de dagen der Patriotten*, p. 143.

recognition of the possibility of virtue among heathens, etc., announced in it, the book was condemned by the Sorbonne in Paris and raised a storm in the Netherlands. The Rotterdam preacher and professor Petrus Hofstede immediately opposed what he considered its exaggerated and unchristian toleration. He published his —*The Belisarius of Marmontel judged and the bad morals of the chief heathens shown* (1769). In opposition the Remonstrant Nozeman came out with his *Socrates's honour maintained*, and the strife so extended in violent pamphlets that the question arose whether it would not be necessary to take measures against the dangerous liberty of the press. Was there not a risk of a repetition of the unfortunate dissensions of the early seventeenth century? Were not Remonstrants and Calvinists opposing one another again? The Estates of Holland in 1765 and following years seriously considered the introduction of a censorship of books. In 1770 the court of Holland drew up a placard against all "blasphemous books and writings," but restriction of the press was prevented by the opposition of the booksellers of Leyden and Amsterdam, led by the freethinker Elie Luzac, a lover of freedom and a facile writer. A placard of 1715 had already been renewed in 1761 against the publication of theological works without ecclesiastical approval.

Heavy tomes and vehement pamphlets, sharp satires and hateful pasquinades thus followed one another in a long series. Not only ecclesiastical and philosophical principles or the virtue of a Socrates and a Marcus Aurelius and their chances of salvation, but also the political and social questions of the day became the subject of these fierce debates. The "Santhorstians," long standing in the odour of heterodoxy, so named from the villa of their leader, the Amsterdam professor Burman, having in the *Vaderlandsche letteroefeningen* (1761) a periodical for the development of their ideas, conducted



vigorously the contest against Hofstede and his friends, from whose circle in 1771 came the *Advocaat der vaderlandsche Kerk* of the Dordrecht preacher Johannes Barueth for maintaining the rights of the "reformed doctrine." At the head of the freethinking Santhorstians was the "baron" of Santhorst himself, Pieter Burman, derided by his enemies as an immoral mocker, a lazy epicurean, a second Voltaire, even a second Aretino. And he repaid with interest the contempt poured out on him and his "flock." His friends supported him with their influence. The talented Betje Wolff, wife of a Beemster domine, in 1772 put into rhyme the Santhorstinian confession of faith and did not fail to reply to the calumnies accusing the sect of being enemies of "the stadtholder's authority" and "the church of the fatherland." The adherents of the new ideas constantly increased in number; slowly but steadily these ideas made their way among the well to do and cultivated classes. From Germany and England came support for the new tendency in philosophy and theology. The German scholars, Ernesti, Michaëlis, and Semler, introduced their independent research into the value of the biblical writings no longer regarded by them as unquestionably divine; Leibnitz's and Wolff's juridical-philosophical theories with their foundation of natural law reached the academic halls of the land of Hugo de Groot and Bijnkershoek, of Arminius and Spinoza, and from there the court and pulpit. Men of character acknowledged readily having taken reason and not ecclesiastical belief as their rule of life. The fight for "common sense," for "philosophical necessity," begun from 1775 in England by the philosopher Priestley, Price's philosophical essays on education and the duty of man, excited as much interest as their political writings and prepared cultivated minds for the new time. The establishment of all sorts of societies in these years gave evidence of the vivid

interest, with which these things were considered in educated circles and made serviceable for the further development of the people. These societies showed how earnest was the endeavour to raise the nation intellectually as well as materially by the coöperation of all, whose "patriotic" feelings desired utterance without partisanship "for the general good." Prize treatises and other works appeared under the auspices of these institutions and proved how knowledge and science were diffused, how budding talents could be developed under their encouragement.

These efforts had a better success in literature than in art. Though long promoted in Dutch cities by many art societies, and practised more generally than ever under the old motto, which for the consolation of small talents says that it is "obtained by work," art was not developed to a higher point than it reached in the middle of the eighteenth century, and this was not to be compared with its rise in the seventeenth century. The great collections of the patricians and rich merchants of this period were composed of old or seventeenth-century art. Painters like Frans van Mieris the younger, who died in 1763, might attempt the manner of their great predecessors, but it was only imitation, and this Leyden artist, the first painter of his time, is more known by his historical writings on his native city than by his insignificant paintings. Even the names of most painters of this time are as good as forgotten, while their works are regarded as scarcely worthy of a place in the museums. The Dutch school of painting had given way to the French school of Watteau and his like, whose sentimental portrait art, elegant, finely coloured, with an Arcadian background of rustic scenes, was imitated in the Netherlands by amateurs of both sexes. Drawing and painting were studied zealously, but the drawing-schools and academies of painting educated



mostly imitators and copyists, and no longer original artists inspired by the example of a master of genius. The books of Lairese and Houbraken were the gospels of the art students, who obeyed their rules slavishly, as the poets before them had bound themselves to the prescriptions of the handbooks of poetry. Clever drawings were made of the old masters of the seventeenth century. The eminent collector and engraver Ploos van Amstel, son-in-law of Cornelis Troost, who in 1764 "surprised the eyes of art connoisseurs" by the invention of an artistic method of putting drawings upon a plate with the greatest exactness, so that reproduction and original were hardly to be distinguished, is a type of the art of the period living by pleasing imitation and accurate copying. Excellent draughtsmen like Jacob Cats of Amsterdam devoted themselves to reproducing old masterpieces, seeking support in painting hangings for the chambers of the patricians. Accuracy and charm are the prominent characteristics of art in these days, but notable is the endeavour to prepare another flourishing period of art by studying the great national masters.

Poetry stood higher, although the unfortunate motto of art and industry, zeal or work, under the protection of numerous poetical societies, gave existence to much trash that wanted to pass for masterpieces. The Amsterdam merchant Van Winter and his gifted wife, Lucretia Wilhelmina Van Merken, understood that their lyre was not equal to Vondel's poetical trumpet, though they were masters of flowing rhyme and "dealt" in poetry. Neither Van Winter's *Amstelstroom*, nor Van Merken's much read *Nut der Tegenspoeden* had anything in common with real art but the name; this was true of *David*, of *Germanicus*, and of Lucretia's numerous patriotic tragedies interpreted by the talented actor Corver. Higher than this poetical couple are undoubtedly the celebrated Van Haren brothers: the Brussels

ambassador Willem, the gifted poet and thinker, friend of Voltaire, who described "human life" in rather rugged language and treated epically Friso's adventures in heavy but philosophical verses; the Frisian regent, after his scandalous affair at The Hague retiring to his country-place at Wolvega, who established his fame as a patriotic poet by his *Geuzen* (1772) and put his troubled soul into the strophes of this epic poem. They did not observe the rules and rhyme requirements, to which Christina de Neufville and Madame De Lannoy still submitted, and which by the Leyden occasional poet and critic Le Francq van Berkhey were held up to the cultivated poets and poetesses of his time, the "poetical poetasters" of Feitama's school. Berkhey, who did not succeed any too well in "the style" and was consequently attacked, began to show opposition to the tyrannical "cabal of poets," the "obstinate and conceited schoolmasters" of the Dutch Parnassus, like a "stubborn scholar, who escapes the ferule."<sup>1</sup> In Elisabeth Wolff appeared a poetess of more than ordinary talent, who sought and found her own way. The *Mengelpoëzy* published in 1772 and the celebrated *Kindergedichten* of the able but rather sweetish Hieronymus van Alphen show that the supremacy of the stiff French predecessors was over, and better German models—Klopstock, Wieland—were coming up with purer though somewhat too sentimental feeling. The new spirit was proclaimed in two new critical periodicals, the Leyden *Tael-en dichtkundige Bijdragen* (1758) and the *Vaderlandsche Letteroefeningen* (1761), which imparted a powerful impulse to criticism. The former periodical came from a circle of Leyden and Utrecht students, who gave up established rules and dared to follow "nature, pure nature in all its beauty."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Jonckbloet, *Gesch. der Letterkunde*, v., 182.

<sup>2</sup> See my address in *Hand. en Meded. van de Maatschappij der Nederl. Letterk.*, 1895-6, p. 64.



The young editors ridiculed the Dutch fondness for verse and declared openly that narrowness and self-admiration were the chief faults of Dutch literature, that they could best be cured by a knowledge of the modern literature among the neighbours and by a return to the long deserted "natural tone." The founders of the latter journal, the Mennonite professors Cornelis and Pieter Loosjes, endeavoured to diffuse moderate principles in literature, but they also speedily opposed the customary "false elevation" and the bad "incense of praise." No less influence was exerted in the right direction by the *Maatschappij der Vaderlandsche Letterkunde* of Leyden. Proceeding from the same students who had called into existence the *Bijdragen* mentioned above, this society aimed, under the lead of Van Goens regarded as the "rescuer of Dutch literature," to reform the entire Dutch "literary republic" and to bring about for it the dawn of a new "golden age." This aspiration, though awakening in the beginning disappointment after disappointment, was not without support from other sides. In 1778 Van Alphen published his work *Theory of the fine arts and sciences*, modestly ascribing its paternity largely to the German æsthetician Riedel. He recognises freely the weakness of Dutch literature and sacrilegiously assails the mutually admiring company of poets. He declares that "the long desired revolution upon our mount of song" must finally come. What came first of all were many æsthetical speculations by Van Engelen, Feith, and others. About 1780 the fame of the old poetical societies began to dwindle very much. Then there came young poets to follow the way pointed out. Bellamy in 1782 published his fresh *Gezangen mijner jeugd* and his inspired *Vaderlandsche gezangen*; Pieter Nieuwland sung his *Orion*. Though these two poets were quickly lost to their fatherland by death, Van Alphen himself published his *Sterrenhemel*, Rhijnvis Feith his first ardent

lyrics. And now came the long expected great poet of the new time, Willem Bilderdijk, the man of the new period "upon the border of two centuries," who left all the others far behind him; in his father's tax office in the years before 1785 he offers little but "fine promises," but he already shows the mastery over language, that will later distinguish him, and is admired as a poet of recognised celebrity at Leyden University, from which he graduated in 1782. In prose Wolff and Deken from 1782, when their first novel *Sara Burgerhart* appeared, stood with Bilderdijk as the representatives of the new time. In literature at least the reformation, the renaissance, talked of about 1780, had become something like a palpable fact. The time of the poetical societies was past as that of the old rhetoricians had gone by. Poetry, the language itself, the vehicle of thought, threw off the fetters binding it during a century. Whether this new flourishing period was to be what was expected of it depended upon other circumstances than intellectual currents alone.

Academical science also went into new paths. Frans Hemsterhuis, son of the famous Leyden philologist Tiberius, though no professor but a government official at The Hague, exercised great influence on the teaching of the classics by his studies on Socrates and Plato. Philosophy and art history began to conquer a place in the study of the classics, and Lessing and Winckelmann made their action felt here and put an end to the almost exclusive rule of language study and text emendation. The Pomeranian David Ruhnkenius, succeeding Oudendorp at Leyden in 1761, is linguist and philosopher and scourges the narrow school learning of his days in his *doctor umbraticus*. His pupil, the Swiss Daniel Wyttenbach, who came to Holland in 1770, laid at Amsterdam the foundations for a more liberal conception of classical studies by his historico-philosophical method. The study



of the mother tongue, led into new roads by the Amsterdam regent Balthasar Huydecoper, began to spread its wings and to devote attention to the rich vocabulary of Dutch. The study of history as a science, no longer as an amusement, finds an energetic leader in Adriaan Kluit, rector at Middelburg, soon professor in Leyden, who brings a period of intelligent criticism after that of the collection of materials. Science and practice go hand in hand more than formerly. The learned Petrus Camper of Leyden (1722-1789), pupil of Musschenbroek and 's Gravesande, professor at Amsterdam, Groningen, and Franeker, founder of the new anatomy, philosopher of European reputation, and talented artist, did not think it beneath him to write a treatise on "the best shoe." Both intellectual and natural sciences left the study to go more into society and to bring to the people in a broader circle the blessings that had hitherto been the portion of the privileged few. It could not be denied that the erudition, which shut itself up in the silence of the study from early morning until late at night and worked only for scholars, fell behind in this endeavour to popularise science, to apply practically what was discovered, and the universities likewise were in a decline. On the other hand, science asserted itself on all sides and made ready to exert a mighty influence upon the development of the new conditions soon to appear throughout the whole world. Theology, as we have seen, could not hold aloof from this current. The names of Socinian, Pelagian, Arminian resounded again as of old, "heretical" opinions concerning the doctrine of justification by faith aroused violent strife. The introduction of a new hymn-book by the States-General in 1775 caused disturbances. There was talk of the need of a new national synod to settle theological and ecclesiastical differences. But the Estates of the different provinces and most classes would not hear to such an assembly after

the Dordrecht model, and the Estates suppressed many a theological quarrel by prohibiting its discussion. Moderation and conciliation of the most extreme opinions were preached especially by the Mennonites and Remonstrant dissenters, vigorous champions of the new spirit. Among the Roman Catholics also many began to ask themselves if the time had not come to bury the old differences of belief. In any case the citizens became more and more convinced that an end must be made of the preëminence of the "ruling church" established politically in the seventeenth century. The cessation was desired of the extortions of sheriffs, bailiffs, burgo-masters, and regents, who regularly took money from the Catholics for conniving at their religious exercises and allowing them to hold office. Other sects were not satisfied with that liberty of conscience; they demanded liberty of its "exercise" as their right, as the right of every man. Thus the day was prepared, when complete religious liberty would be granted to all sects without any restriction. The "ruling church" was living its "last days"; such men as the Loosjes brothers and Houttuyn, as Noordkerk and Trotz exercised a wide influence through spoken and written word; their intellectual allies Wolff and Deken no less so through their popular novels.

From this circle came in 1784 the *Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen* or *Society for Public Welfare*, whose founder, honest Maarten Nieuwenhuyzen, Mennonite preacher at Monnikendam, aimed to make the "common man," as well as the cultivated classes, share in the increased knowledge "both in civil and religious matters and in the department of the useful arts and sciences," and to educate the poor by publishing books and improving the schools. The new society in a few years numbered hundreds of members, covering the whole country and doing much for the enlightenment of the



people. Young Swildens wanted also to be a teacher of the people and to devote his life to a reform of popular instruction. His *Vaderlandsch A. B. boek* (1781) was intended to diffuse necessary patriotic ideas. He wished to revive popular reading by issuing a new *Almanack en politiek zakboekje* in place of the silly almanacs that formed the chief pabulum of the reading public. He wanted to withdraw education from the church, which had hitherto ruled over it, and to transfer it to the state as the most important matter in its care. With Nieuwenhuyzen and his friends, whose ideas were influenced by his *A. B. Boek*,<sup>1</sup> he believed that the diffusion of cheap and simple literature was of great use for the improvement of understanding and conduct. More and more the conviction gained ground that the lower classes of the people must be better educated, that free schools ought to be established in city and village by the government. In Rotterdam, Hoorn, Utrecht, Middelburg such schools were founded, where children of both sexes were instructed in reading, writing, arithmetic, and singing, and were accustomed to good order. Art, science for the people was the general watchword in union with the political ideas of the time, in which no longer the interest of princes or regents but that of the people came to the fore. What seemed to be approaching in the days of Prince William and Leicester, what was suppressed with a hard hand in the seventeenth century, what in 1748 had made itself heard louder than ever in the republic, came up now with greater force. The city burghers would no longer submit to being thrust aside by the patricians. The writings of the English and French democrats and the American War of Independence had a great influence. Van der Capellen and his friends spoke enthusiastically of the "heartly food for men" served up to their contemporaries in a philo-

<sup>1</sup> Boeles, *De patriot J. H. Swildens*, p. 102.

sophical form by Price, Priestley, Fletcher, and Tillotson, by Rousseau and the Encyclopedists. They wanted to put the omnipotence of the people in place of the aristocratic forms of government, the supports of those who thought themselves created with boots and spurs and the rest of mankind with saddles on their backs. They declared themselves in favour of a monarchy resting upon the popular will rather than for an aristocratic republic. They looked upon America as the ideal of a popular state, greeted by some as a "second fatherland," hailed in prose and verse as the land of promise and the birth-place of new liberties. Rousseau went further in his *Contrat social*, proclaiming the ideal supremacy of the individual in complete freedom obeying only reason modified by sentiment. According to him men, born in freedom, have tempered that freedom, voluntarily binding it by a "social contract" which makes it possible to live in freedom. Not the divine right of kings, not the violence of aristocracies, but the free will of men is the foundation of all social relations. In poetical language he pictures the advantages of this new theory, directed primarily against monarchical despotism in France, but useful also against regents like those of the republic. There was a lack of clearness in these writers as to the application of their ideas. Van der Capellen and his friends had not settled with themselves or with one another how this popular influence was to be introduced. No programme of reform of the state had been worked out; the only purpose was to remove whatever seemed to conflict with the new theories of supremacy of the people. No arbitrary power of the stadtholder, no military jurisdiction, but above all no more tyranny of the regents, who sacrificed the welfare of the state to their own advantage and so had brought the nation to the edge of the abyss, intellectually and materially, politically, and socially!



How stood this welfare now? In 1782 Van de Spiegel, council pensionary of Zealand, drew up for himself a memoir on the "intrinsic and relative strength of the republic." He opposed the assertion that the "internal strength" of the state was wholly in a decline. There was complaint of the falling off in commerce, but was this really so great? No such large profits were made now as in the most flourishing period of commerce about 1648, and this was owing mainly to competition. On the other hand the West Indian colonies, then rarely visited, now employed two hundred ships annually in their trade; monarchies like Russia and Poland were just reaching their full development in the eighteenth century; new articles, such as tobacco, coffee, and tea, brought treasures; money and exchange had grown with the wealth of capital in the country; the facilities of commerce were greatly increased. Some branches of commerce might have fallen behind, but from his study he thought it "absurd" to speak in general of a decline. However, the East India Company, that pillar of the state, was unmistakably languishing, and the highest principle of government, spoken of under the governor-general Mossel and his successors Van de Parra, Van Riemsdijk, and De Klerk, was: "It will last out my time." India was overflowing with "fortune-seeking" Europeans, whose only purpose was to fill their pockets. Former shoemakers, tailors, butchers, runaway sons of regents, useless subjects occupied the most lucrative offices, though they could scarcely read or write. Smuggling and stealing was a general fault with official and free citizen. Preachers were more interested in card-playing and drinking bouts than in their studies and church. In 1780 Batavia's population dropped to twelve thousand (in 1760 still sixteen thousand) souls, only a few hundred of them being Europeans and not half of those Dutch. Although these Europeans lived like princes, so that

almost every one had a carriage and silverware, jewels and gold buttons on his clothes, so that a large number of slaves was common and every soldier had his slave to carry his sunshade, the company itself could not boast of abundant revenues. The company's capital was too small for the new commercial relations, hardly eleven to twelve millions, and its twenty-five vessels yearly were too few. Though it profited annually by its Indian commerce between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000 guilders, its mercantile system appeared more and more antiquated, and at the expiration of its charter in 1774 many voices called for reform. With the prince's aid the old charter was prolonged twenty years more on December 12, 1776, by the States-General. So the company's affairs went on declining. Its dividends, amounting in 1757 to 20 per cent., did not rise over  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.; its shares, in 1750 at 594 per cent., had dropped in 1780 to little more than 300 per cent. Loan after loan had to bolster up its condition. Matters in Hither India, where the company's offices came under the eyes of the English predominant there since Clive had established the English authority and the inexorable Hastings followed in his steps, showed that the English company was ready to take the heritage of the Dutch company. Clive had threatened Mossel with a visit at Batavia, and English ships before that city had demanded the striking of the flag on the company's vessels. It was no longer to be doubted that the company would fall an easy prey to the English. Not the least provision was made against an attack, and a few ships would suffice to destroy the Dutch power in Asia. The company was, said Mossel, "a sinking ship, which is kept above water by the pumps." In no better condition was the languishing West India Company, whose shares had fallen to 35 to 36 per cent., whose dividends were 3 to 4 per cent. Where these powerful commercial corporations were visibly sink-



ing, the trade of the mother country long connected with them necessarily suffered severe loss, for the Dutch merchant travelled the same paths his fathers had gone before him under quite other conditions, and this was one of the chief causes of his fall. The old energy and daring were wanting, which had made the Dutch merchant great but now seemed to have become the portion of his vigorous rival across the sea. Infected with the mania for speculation, the Dutch merchant began to give up true commerce. He preferred putting his capital into a money business, risking it in dangerous speculations, in case he was not content with collecting interest on money loaned. The numerous bankruptcies of late years had inflicted a heavy blow on credit, the soul of all trade. The fact was irrefutable that commerce was declining, but with proper attention from the merchant himself the decline should not have been so great.

About 1780 industry, for a long time declining, was in a bad state. A few trades only held their ground, such as salt works, oil mills, bleacheries, starch manufacture, diamond-cutting. Cheaper wares imported from abroad had crowded out of the market many articles made in the country. To set their own prices some merchants had long sold foreign articles below their value and thus had ruined many domestic factories. The higher standard of living, the consequence of the country's greater wealth, had raised wages for a time and run up the prices of manufactured goods, so that it was harder to compete with foreign countries, although money was easily obtainable owing to the low rate of interest. Adriaan Rogge in his work *Over den grond van Neerlands koophandel* speaks of the considerable number of sugar refineries, dyehouses, weaving works, and the like, that on account of competition had removed to Hamburg, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Spain, and France.

Shipbuilding was of little consequence,<sup>1</sup> ropewalks disappeared, Delft pottery gave way in the market to the porcelain of England and Rouen, hats made in Holland were superseded by those of Brabant. The countless breweries had lost much by the coming up of gin as a popular drink, though Schiedam with its distilleries was more flourishing than ever. The book business was now limited to the sale of Dutch books, that of French and Latin works having become insignificant. The paper manufacturers of Holland and Gelderland, formerly furnishing the world, were surpassed by French and Prussian makers in consequence of the prohibition of the exportation of rags from France and Prussia. The gold and silver stuffs, damasks, velvets, and brocades of Amsterdam belonged to the past. The beautiful and durable but dear cloths of Utrecht and Leyden were driven out by cheaper foreign sorts. The linen industry had mostly gone to Westphalia, Silesia, Belgium, though foreign linens still came to Haarlem to be bleached and were then put on the market as "Holland" linens. Luzac speaks sadly of the "deadness" of our once flourishing inland towns, which he viewed with tears in his eyes. Complaints come from all sides. Broek in Waterland, that formerly knew no poverty, saw every year its prosperity wane. Other quondam flourishing villages of North Holland,—Schagen, Assendelft, Wormer, and Sloterdijk,—were characterised as "half fallen"; still others saw their frequented markets go into decline, their houses decay, their freight traffic move to other cities.

Under these circumstances in many cities and villages poverty began to cause deep solicitude, now they were

<sup>1</sup> Luzac, ii., p. 327. But three hundred vessels were still built every year at Zaandam. What follows is chiefly from data in Luzac, the continuation of Wagenaar's *Amsterdam*, vol. xvi. of the *Verhandelingen der Holl. Maatschappij*, and the magazine *De Koopman*, *passim*.



filled with indigent people. The building up of the ruined factories with government help or as a charity was seriously considered. Attention was fastened especially upon linen weaving, which could be done at home by women and children. It was calculated that wages of seven or eight guilders, satisfactory for the time, might be thus earned by a family without injury to the industry of the country. Poor-houses rose up everywhere; the sad lot of the common man, living on scanty wages in hovels and suffering for lack of bread, attracted general attention. It was no longer to be permitted that the children of the poor "rough and ungodly" should be brought up without intelligent development, that boys, going young to sea, then running from one trade to another, and finally wandering around without bread to eat, should fall a prey to all sorts of vices, that girls, who could neither read nor write nor knew any business but to peddle things along the streets, should go from bad to worse. The arrangement of the long standing deaconries was subjected to criticism and no less so the management of the considerable amounts acquired for them by collection or gift. Attention was directed to scandalous abuses, to the careless way the money was expended, to the sending of paupers from poorer provinces into Holland, famed for its wealth and charity, and from the villages into the cities, thus burdening them with a number of poor people out of proportion to the actual condition of their population. But it was understood that the old partial remedies could not help, that commerce and industry, the diffusers of prosperity and happiness, could not be saved by philosophical demonstrations, nor by the "offering of tearful prayers and urgent solicitations of heaven," from which one writer expected salvation. Causes enough were known of the lamentable decline of commerce and industry. Heavy taxes and the rise in wages combined with the generally

higher standard of living, growing competition elsewhere, the importation of East Indian and American goods to the prejudice of similar European products, the increasing aversion to the vicissitudes of commerce and industry, dishonesty in trade, defects in the administration of government, the decline of the great companies and their colonies and possessions, the ignorance of merchants, the lack of skilful workmen, the numerous failures, the development of smuggling and fraud, the concentration of commerce in a few chief places: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Dordrecht, Leyden, Haarlem—all this was mentioned as the cause of the deplorable condition.

Renewal and reform became the universal wish.<sup>1</sup> The necessity of a reform of the government was first shown, of a restoration of the state's credit at home and abroad. Some ideas were taken up that had been already developed in the proposals of William IV. For Luzac the system of a free port was the great means for restoring commerce and manufactures. Freedom seemed to be the panacea. Men demanded early government reform, relief of commerce, suppression of smuggling, taxation of luxury, temporary favours to manufacturers, freedom for manufactures and trade in the country to withdraw it from the stepmotherly treatment of centuries by the dominant cities, improvement of the colonies by better government, restoration of credit, legal restraint of usury and speculation in stocks, better ship-building, expulsion of peddlers from city and country, clearing of waste lands, increased planting of potatoes as a cheap food, obligation of the West Indian colonies to use Dutch goods, more general instruction in commerce, appointment of experienced consuls abroad, establishment of societies for the encouragement of commerce and industry, popular education in general. Against moral, political, and eco-

<sup>1</sup> Luzac, iv., p. 282. See the works of Rogge, Zillesen, Van den Heuvel, etc., on commerce and poverty.



nomical causes there had to be also moral, political, and economical remedies, all in the spirit of freedom, which was the universal resource to win back the lost prosperity, to make an end of the prevailing misery, to prevent the inevitable collapse of the state. The question was whether the political circumstances would allow these ideals to be realised, whether freedom would be in a condition to prepare all these advantages. There were many doubters and deniers. There were many among the people of the Netherlands, attached to old traditions perhaps more than any other nation, who would not hear to all these novelties, who neither wrote nor spoke against them, but opposed an obstinate resistance to the pressure of their eager advocates. The cautious old people shook their heads at the wild ideals of the younger ones. But the latter did not lose courage, and about 1780 they might still hope that the time was not far distant, when their ideals of renewal and reform were to be accomplished. In any case they were ready to suffer and fight for them and full of expectation as to the result of this fight for the true, the beautiful, and the good, of which their beloved authors had spoken to them in such eloquent language—an enthusiasm, not lacking in the sentimental character of the time, which was earnest in aim, no matter how bombastically and affectedly it might often be expressed.





## CHAPTER XI

### THE FOURTH ENGLISH WAR

WITH spirit, with rashness said the opposition in Parliament, England had begun war against its old ally. The future did not look rose-coloured for the mistress of the seas with war in America, against France and Spain, in Hither India, with the disloyal disposition of the Irish, the dangerous attitude of the northern powers, and the increase of the public debts under a weak ministry. At the end of 1780 it was plain that England was playing a desperate game in raising up a new enemy still formidable by wealth. But Lord North, the head of the English Tory government, who during ten years, supported by the king's favour, had defied the opposition of the elder Pitt, the talented Burke, and young Fox, leaders of the Whigs, was not the man to give up. The English nation also, proud of its "empire," was ready to enter into a new conflict with the weak republic, which would become an easy and rich prey to any vigorous assailant. English merchants hoped this time to destroy the hated *Carthago* and to enrich themselves with its spoils. Reckless self-confidence inspired the government and people of England in these years. Little different was the feeling of many in the republic. Many wanted war with England and hoped that coöperation between the allied enemies of the island kingdom would bring it down as low as it had been raised on high. These sentiments were kindled by fiery patriotic



pamphlets. In exaggerated language there was talk of reviving the old spirit, of the coming up of Tromps and De Ruyters, of a renewal of debilitated forces. Men acquainted with the real strength of the state avoided using such words. They knew that the neglect of the navy for years could not be repaired at once, that the colonies east and west lay undefended a prey to the first attack, that the French naval power was not equal to the English, and that a junction with the French fleet might be prevented by strong English squadrons in the North Sea and the Channel.

But men had to do what they could. The committee on naval affairs from the States-General deliberated with the admiralty lords and found that there were ninety-four vessels mostly unseaworthy, which it was impossible to furnish with the requisite 18,500 men. It was advised to construct coast batteries, to guard the inlets with the existing ships, to begin the building of new ships, to prohibit all navigation in order to secure at least half of the necessary crews, to equip the arsenals, and for the payment of all this to urge the provinces to appropriate fourteen and a half million guilders. The desired credit was granted, letters of marque were issued, and a beginning was made with other matters, but the energetic management of the days of De Witt and William III. was wanting. Two war-ships and many merchantmen fell into the enemy's hands before they really knew there was a war. To warn the West Indian Islands a small war-vessel sailed from the Tagus before the end of January, but it arrived soon enough only for Surinam and Curaçao, because as early as February 3d a fleet under Rodney had appeared before St. Eustatius, which, defended by one ship commanded by captain Van Bylandt and a small garrison, could not do much against Rodney's fifteen large ships, other frigates, and three thousand men, and surrendered after a short resistance.

The rich spoils of one hundred and thirty merchantmen, warehouses filled with tobacco and sugar, all amounting in value to about forty millions, besides two thousand mostly American prisoners, were the reward of the victor, who enticed many more merchantmen by keeping the Dutch flag flying. The island was pillaged, and the admiral and his men enriched themselves in a shameful manner. A convoy of twenty-three merchantmen that had just sailed out from St. Eustatius was also captured after the death of the commanding rear-admiral Crul. Curaçao under the lead of the rear-admiral Van Bylandt was properly defended and saved, but Demerara was surrendered by its governor Schuylenburg, who favoured the English, and Essequibo and Berbice suffered the same fate in March. In the East Indies fell in the summer Negapatam, the factories in Bengal, those on the western coast of Sumatra, later Trincomalee; the Cape was rescued by a French fleet under de Suffren, who sailed for India in the spring of 1782, recaptured Trincomalee, and secured Ceylon and Java against English attacks. The sending out of a fleet was urged, but what could be done with fifty half-serviceable bottoms? Meanwhile commerce, especially the Baltic commerce, demanded convoy in March "without any harmful delay," and the States-General assented. But a meeting of admiralty lords and naval officers appointed by the prince decided that it was impracticable. Amsterdam's government did not venture to speak too loud, fearing a tumult among the Orange-loving populace, which reproached it for bringing on the war. In vain Capellen tot den Poll and others urged it to call for an investigation of the navy; it avoided even the appearance of a friendly attitude towards the American agent John Adams, who still remained in Amsterdam, hoping for a loan in behalf of America and for the recognition of his government. Complaints of the inactivity of the fleet became louder and



were soon directed against the prince; Amsterdam accused him of negligence and slowness and proposed to put at his side a council to consider with him how the republic's disgrace was to be wiped out and how a valiant defence might be made. The prince, shocked by this proposal, suggested on his side an invitation to the admiralties to begin an inquiry into the causes of the "lamentable state"—an idea that most plainly shows his innocence as well as his complete unfitness for his post.

So it became summer, before anything of importance occurred. The report came only of a brilliant fight made by the captains Melvill and Oorthuys before Gibraltar; although the former had to surrender, the latter saved his ship and even compelled an English vessel to strike its flag. There was to be a convoy to the Baltic, though a numerous English squadron under Hyde Parker had been heard of, which was commissioned to destroy the small fleet off Texel. The rear-admiral Johan Arnold Zoutman and captain Jan Hendrik Van Kinsbergen received orders early in July to sail out from Texel with some seventy merchantmen. Parker was just then coming out of the Sound with two hundred English merchantmen. The two fleets met on the morning of August 5th at Doggerbank, where the seven Dutch ships engaged in combat with the much heavier and equally numerous English vessels.<sup>1</sup> Ranged in two lines, they cannonaded one another for hours; the two squadrons fought valiantly and suffered severe losses, until Parker at four o'clock with his disabled ships retreated without being in a condition to form a line again, and Zoutman, after waiting half an hour for another fight, returned to Texel with his no less disabled squadron, one ship having sunk. This battle raised the falling spirit of the republic. The bravery and unanimity on the fleet were highly praised,

<sup>1</sup> The details in De Jonge, iv., p. 513.

and great were the honours greeting Zoutman, Van Kinsbergen, and the captains Dedel, Van Braam, Bentinck, Braak, and Staring, with all the crews; Bentinck's death from his wounds awakened sorrow. General enthusiasm was manifested; people wore Zoutman medals; verses were written in honour of the heroes of Doggerbank; a "patriotic fund for the encouragement of the sea service" was raised, from which arose after three years the Amsterdam Training School for Navigation. Although the honour of the flag had been brilliantly upheld, the mercantile fleet destined for the Baltic was obliged to return with the squadron, and the Indiamen shut up in Norway could not reach the fatherland without great danger. The merchants demanded convoy, for commerce was at a standstill, so that instead of two thousand only eleven Dutch vessels passed through the Sound this year. In the fall a squadron was ready at Texel, but the appearance of a large English one compelled the commander Van Braam to return as soon as he sailed out. A sum of over nine millions was appropriated for new equipment, later one of nearly eight and one half millions, in the spring of 1782 a third sum of over twelve millions to bring up the navy to one hundred and twenty vessels with twenty-five thousand men. The possibility of withstanding the British fleets independently was doubted, and the Amsterdam burgomaster Rendorp recurred to his proposal of a year earlier for making an agreement with France jointly to send a fleet to sea, Holland proposed coöperation with France in February, and the States-General consented to it in March. Now the Amsterdam admiralty put itself in communication with de la Vauguyon. The dissatisfaction in the country at the continued inaction of the fleet, on which millions had been spent, increased hand over hand and was directed both against the commanding vice-admiral Hartsinck, who was supported by his flag-officers in his resolution to



avoid the much stronger English, and against the prince himself, who finally ordered the fleet on July 5, 1782, to put to sea without delay. Two days later vice-admiral Hartsinck sailed out with Van Bylandt and Van Kinsbergen at the head of a fleet of thirty-three vessels to escort some merchantmen northwards. Again appeared a powerful English squadron and prevented further enterprises. Commerce once more stood still for want of convoy, unless a few ships had the luck to escape the vigilance of the English. The war-ships venturing to sea had always to return to port on the appearance of English squadrons.

Finally in September there came a report that the strong English squadron on the coast had sailed to the Channel, presumably to join the large fleet destined to relieve besieged Gibraltar. Now was the time to sail out and escort the merchantmen to and from Norway and the Baltic. Something ought to be done with the fleet, for Zeeland also addressed an urgent missive to the States-General, the other provinces, and the prince, complaining of the inaction of the ships, which "lay rotting at anchor" shamefully blockaded by an inferior force. Indignant at this attitude of Zeeland, which in sixteen years had built only one ship of the line and one frigate, the prince declared himself ready to explain matters, the more so as Holland began to stir and at the end of September resolved to appoint a commission to consider with the prince the condition of the navy. The prince proclaimed that he owed an account to the States-General alone and would soon make a report to them. This he did on October 7th in a "missive and memoir," giving a broad survey of the resolutions concerning the navy during his service as admiral-general and appealing to the impossibility of restoring in a few years what had been neglected during half a century. This important public document was widely circulated but encountered

contradiction and derision in anti-stadtholder journals and in violent pamphlets. Three days later the prince appointed a "navy department of His Highness" to stand by him in the management of naval affairs. Distrust of the prince's conduct was too deeply rooted for even this excellent measure to be of any help. It was hardly considered in presence of the sensation occasioned by the failure of a plan proposed by de la Vauguyon. Before the prince had presented his missive, the French ambassador (September 20th), mentioning the departure of the English fleet for Gibraltar, urged in conjunction with Amsterdam the prince to let the fleet sail for Brest, where a considerable French fleet lay. From there the combined fleets might either start for India or cruise along the English coast to injure English commerce. In any case Rodney returning from the West Indies with great spoils could be easily captured in the Channel. Some saw difficulties in the plan, because the fleet could not then be used for the so necessary protection of commerce, and because it was hazardous to venture it so far away. With continuous pressure from the ambassador the States-General finally resolved on October 3d to send ten ships to Brest. Meanwhile all sorts of rumours were current about the speedy return of the English fleet from Gibraltar, severe storms on the French coast, and the favourable result of the siege for England, so that the fleet there became unnecessary. These reports diminished the none too great inclination of the commanding naval officers to let the squadron depart for Brest. Vice-admiral Van Bylandt, appointed commander of the squadron, on account of the want of sails, ropes, anchors, winter clothing, and provisions, declared it impossible to put to sea at once, while the captains of the ships and all the flag-officers at Texel asserted the same to the vice-admiral Hartsinck and declined responsibility for the expedition. In these circumstances



the States-General in extraordinary session resolved to inform the French ambassador that owing to "a concatenation of fortuitous circumstances" his wish could not be satisfied.

Great was the indignation in the country at this termination of the affair, which was attributed to the prince's partiality for England, to the negligence of the admiralties, to the unwillingness of the naval officers. The treaty of friendship and commerce concluded with America on October 8, 1782, could not atone for the disappointment. The French ambassador was furious; a committee from the Estates of Holland repeatedly called upon the prince for enlightenment; Friesland, supported by City and Land, addressed a sharp letter to the prince demanding an accounting. Holland desired to see an investigation by an extraordinary commission. After considerable wrangling this was resolved upon at the end of 1783. The commission undertook a thorough investigation, which lasted fifteen months, and its results filled three volumes. So the affair came to the States-General in the summer of 1785 amid serious domestic disturbances; the vice-admiral Van Bylandt was principally accused, and Gelderland was interested in his fate, so that the question was not decided at the restoration of the stadtholder's power in 1787. Nothing more of importance occurred at sea in the war. Sometimes merchantmen were convoyed safely to and from the Baltic; privateering brought slight advantages in consequence of English vigilance in the North Sea and the inaction of the Dutch fleet. The republic's commerce suffered much from English privateers, two hundred Dutch vessels being captured in the first month of the war. The only resource seemed to consist in a sale of ship and cargo to neutrals. Vigorous action of a large navy could alone produce improvement, but ships and sailors could not be created from nothing. A new pro-

posal of January, 1783, to fit out a fleet, fourteen millions being appropriated for forty-six ships of the line, twenty-six frigates, and seventy smaller vessels, was soon put aside by the conclusion of a truce. Peace seemed to be in sight.

This peace was anything but advantageous to the state. During the war England had repeatedly tried to draw the republic from France and win it for a separate peace. The consul of Sardinia at Amsterdam, Triquetti, in England's pay, had offered to the Amsterdam burgomaster Rendorp negotiation from the English side, but his colleague Temminck, favouring France, would not hear to it; an attempt also made upon Rendorp by the Englishman Wentworth had little success. The republic's evident hesitation to enter into a closer alliance with the Americans caused the belief, that it would eagerly seize upon any chance for peace. Little was accomplished by the solicitations of Adams, appointed minister plenipotentiary to the republic in March, 1781, and by his memorial on the interest of the two republics in a closer connection; the memorial, presented in April, 1781, was more than a year under consideration, as the peace party, headed by Rendorp, resisted all efforts of the friends of America to conclude an alliance in order not to embitter England too much. The warlike temper in England appeared somewhat cooled, and the English nation began to see how dangerous the arrogant policy of its government was. An attempt was made to secure the mediation of Russia, but the terms offered were unacceptable, and a new journey of Wentworth to the republic only showed how firmly it was bound to France. In March, 1782, the English ministry fell, and now the chance of peace seemed to increase. Fox, the leader of foreign affairs, displayed a readiness to conclude a truce and then a peace upon the basis of the old treaties, even to come to a general peace with the sacrifice of the colonies in America. It



soon appeared that only at Paris was anything to be obtained for England. The Dutch ambassador in Paris, Lestevenon van Berkenrode, was joined by a second ambassador, the Arnhem burgomaster Brantsen. There was no more talk of a separate peace with England, and the French ally was not inclined to make sacrifices for the weak republic. So everything went on outside of the republic. On November 30, 1782, the Americans concluded a preliminary treaty at Paris with England, which recognised their complete independence, but declined, in relation to the republic, to adhere to the proposals of Fox, who had meanwhile resigned. There was no more chance that the republic would get back all its lost possessions; the only hope was that France, ready to give back the Cape and St. Eustatius, might succeed in rescuing some more. Finally, according to preliminaries signed January 20, 1783, Negapatam alone was to be permanently lost; the republic was included in the truce just concluded. Now the question was whether it should be taken into the peace. It refused to give up Negapatam, the seat of the cinnamon trade, though it was willing to grant free navigation for England to the Moluccas; it desired to see the armed neutrality maintained. Negotiation was long and broad, while France urged yielding. From the other side England would relinquish Negapatam, if the Dutch came to London to negotiate and separated from France. The appearance once more of Fox as minister furnished a favourable opportunity to the republic, but no advance was made with England owing to the opposition of the friends of France. The prince's patriotic opponents did their very best to induce France to spare the republic the disgrace of such a peace, but it was in vain. The whole year 1783 and the following spring passed in fruitless negotiation with increasing differences in the republic itself, which gave England some hope of a victory for its champions there. This

hope grew constantly less. The English proposal to negotiate in London was declined in January after consultation with France, and the young William Pitt now governed England with great ability, not concerning himself about the continent any more than seemed absolutely necessary. The republic was handed over to France, and England drew back. The definitive treaty of peace, which the republic concluded at Paris on May 20, 1784, sealed its fall as an independent great power as well as the defeat of its diplomacy. Henceforth it was bound to the triumphal car of France, which under the guidance of the able Vergennes had secured for America independence, for Spain the restoration of Florida and Minorca, for itself the return of factories in Hindostan, four West Indian islands, and two establishments in Africa, but had inflicted upon the republic the loss of Negapatam and the admittance of the English into the Moluccas.

The English war had most fatal consequences also for the internal condition of the republic. The inaction of the navy, attributed to the prince, caused opposition to his authority in the republic, especially to the hated duke of Brunswick, still considered his adviser and guardian. Amsterdam and the three pensionaries, allies of de la Vauguyon, took the leadership, being supported by the malcontents recognising Van der Capellen tot den Poll as their chief and by the many citizens who, weary of the rule of the regents and of the "spoiling hand" of the prince, desired reform of the government. They made use of the powerful weapon of the press and not alone in the ordinary pamphlet form, in which the "voice of the people" had spoken for more than two centuries, but now in the shape of political periodicals, weeklies, and dailies, which in and after 1781 came up like mushrooms and testified to the vivid interest, with which the still undeveloped population began to follow the course of political events. The newspapers existing since the



seventeenth century in the principal Dutch cities had generally been limited to the announcement of what had happened in the political world. The most esteemed of them was the *Gazette de Leyde*, excellently edited by Etienne and Jean Luzac and considered over all Europe as the best informed reporter of what was doing in politics. In 1779 went out from the French embassy, which always made abundant use of the press in the republic, the publication of the *Lettres hollandaises*, "the first polemical work which has appeared on the present affairs of our nation." A. M. Cérissier was a co-worker on it, a clever author who in 1777 had begun to issue a remarkable *Tableau de l'histoire générale des Pays-Bas*. Probably it was these *Lettres hollandaises*, called later *Nouvelles lettres hollandaises*, and continued by Cérissier himself in *Le politique hollandais* (from February, 1781), that suggested to Dutch authors the establishment of a Dutch political weekly, which should no longer confine itself to relating what had occurred or to announcing auctions, etc., but would be emboldened to criticise events and the leading statesmen at home and abroad. The first weekly of this kind was the *Post van den Neder-Rhijn*, of which the first number, concerning the "Declaration of war by England on our republic," appeared on January 20, 1781. It was printed by the Utrecht publisher Paddenburg and edited by Pieter 't Hoen, the circulation soon increasing to twenty-four hundred numbers per week. Besides in young and ardent workers like the turbulent student Ondaatje, an East Indian,<sup>1</sup> and other correspondents, 't Hoen found support and coöperation in Van der Capellen, Valckenaer, Van der Kemp, and their democratic friends, also in regents of Amsterdam and elsewhere. It was especially the journals and pamphlets of this circle that adopted the honourable title of

<sup>1</sup> See Davies, *Memorials and times of P. P. J. Q. Ondaatje* (*Werken Hist. Gen.*, No. 13).

“patriot” for themselves and their friends and made a party name of it, which was soon universally used, even by the partisans of Orange, to indicate all the opponents of the stadtholder in the republic, democratic citizens and aristocratic members of the regents’ party working together fraternally against the common enemy. The ordinary newspapers also began to be bold enough to vary their relations with criticisms. In the course of 1782 freedom of the press gained ground, and Van der Capellen could exult in the evident increase of the “opposition”; he hoped to attain a state of liberty which would loosen the “golden chains” fettering men. Although many colonies should be lost by war, he declared, the securing of complete freedom of the press with a militia would be a sufficient gain.

The adherents of the government and many moderates were naturally angered. “Nobody is free from attack,” the *Nederlandsche Jaarboeken* complained in 1782, “it is more like a market or other open place, where boys play and, getting into quarrels and fights, pelt one another with stones; hardly does an innocent passer come along, before he too receives a shower of them.” Distrust augmented, because most of these journals appeared anonymously. It went no further than admonitions from the States and municipal governments to the printers and publishers of the papers, and no attempt was made to bind the press by prosecutions and prohibitions. In these circumstances little remained to be done for defence but to use the same means that served for attack and to establish weeklies on the stadtholder side. The weak efforts in this direction soon showed that the talent and daring were not on this side. In the first months of 1781 the scribbling had been mainly directed against the duke of Brunswick, whom the French party considered as the faithful ally and paid hireling of England. He, who in 1769 had appealed to the traditions of liberty



against the plans for curbing the press, became now a sacrifice to excessive freedom of the press. The bitter reproaches of the newspapers obtained support, when on June 8, 1781, the Amsterdam burgomasters Rendorp and Temminck with their pensionary Visscher in an audience with the prince advised the stadtholder in a long memorial to dismiss from his presence the duke, who was regarded as the "cause of the country's misfortune"; then only could there be "good correspondence" between the prince and Amsterdam. Rendorp was now the leading personage in Amsterdam and esteemed himself master of the situation, a man of talent but too conceited. His work it was that on May 18th Amsterdam had complained in the Estates of Holland of the inaction of the fleet and had proposed giving to the prince a council of provincial commissioners. Thus he hoped to make the prince and Amsterdam work together. But the duke of Brunswick, who was on bad terms with Amsterdam, would have to be removed. The memorial declared that the distrust was chiefly of Brunswick. The prince was warned that this distrust might be turned against him if he deliberated with a foreigner on "what was most necessary and useful for the preservation and service of the country." It was evidently desired to drive away first the duke and then himself and his house, the prince complained; baseness was demanded of him in requesting him to expel from his court his "second father," as if he were a "villain and traitor." The prince thought best to communicate the memorial in its entirety to the duke, the memorialists asserting that they were not desirous of driving away the latter but wanted to procure for him an "honourable retreat" with retention of all his titles and emoluments. Brunswick considered himself insulted, and on June 21st in a letter to the States-General he requested that the accusations against him should be proved or condemned as calumnies, whereupon an in-

vestigation by the admiralties followed, and on July 2d the duke was acquitted by the States-General of the charges made in the memorial. Meanwhile Amsterdam in response to the duke's letter had published the memorial and thus persuaded Brunswick's numerous enemies to speak out. The duke was now assailed from all sides, and nothing came of the satisfaction demanded by him. The anonymous writers of pamphlets and pasquinades directed their efforts more and more against the prince also. He was reviled as a simpleton beside the false duke; another lampoon declares him not worth a doughnut to the country, because he allows himself to be ruled so shamefully by a boor; a third advised him to kick out the cur, the rascally pilot, or to hang him up for a mirror. A "free Frisian" proclaimed his eagerness to die, if Orange might sink into the grave with him.

It could not go on longer thus. Vigorous measures had to be taken by the Orange party against this clever press campaign. Among the prince's adherents the only one equal to wielding the same formidable weapons was the former Utrecht professor and regent Van Goens, who replied to Calkoen's defence of the conduct of Amsterdam towards America in a sharp pamphlet attacking the avarice and ambition of the powerful commercial city, which by its shameful plan for a treaty with the Americans had involved the republic in a dangerous war. Soon Van Goens (August, 1781) undertook to edit an Orange weekly, the *Ouderwetsche Nederlandsche Patriot*, but could not get a circulation of more than seven hundred copies, and the paper died in a year and a half, while the patriotic newspapers and pamphlets found everywhere eager readers. No writing of this sort made a deeper impression at that time than the pamphlet—*Aan het Volk van Nederland*, flowing from the pen of Van der Capellen and distributed over the whole country by Van der Kemp, who had it thrown into the streets of



all the cities on September 25 and 26, 1781.<sup>1</sup> This violent pamphlet gives a series of so-called historical disclosures concerning the real aims of the "ambitious men," who for nearly two centuries had been trying to put a hereditary yoke upon the free necks of the people. The successive Orange princes are depicted as tyrants, even William I., who aspired to the power of count. The writer refers to the bad government of William III., to the disturbances of the Orange faction in the stadtholderless time, to the selfishness of William IV., finally to his son "who is now making us unhappy." He accuses the prince of conspiring with England "to bring proud Amsterdam to reason." He declares that not the duke but the prince himself is the guilty one, who can do everything and consequently is responsible for everything. He advises that the people assemble in city and village and choose "good patriots" to command the States "in the name and on the authority of this nation" to investigate with them the "causes of the far-reaching inaction and weakness" in the war. There must be a general taking up of arms to make the "good cause" triumph with the help of "Jehovah, the God of Freedom." Not until our day was the real writer of the pamphlet discovered. The cabal against the duke went on without cessation. A number of pamphlets brought accusations against him of treason and corruption. Finally the prince made it evident that the temporary withdrawal of the duke seemed to him the best solution. He wrote this to him at the end of April. So Brunswick departed on May 18, 1782, for his government of Boisle-Duc to wait for better days.

Amsterdam was now master of the field, but it soon

<sup>1</sup> See his autobiography, edited by Mrs. Fairchild (New York, 1903), p. 54. On the authorship: the writings of A. Loosjes, *Een krachtig libel* (1886), and *Nog een en ander over het pamflet Aan het Volk van Nederland* (1891).

appeared that Rendorp could neither wage war vigorously nor conclude an honourable peace. He saw his influence dwindle before that of Van Berckel supported by the club of young patriots. Among the patriotic Amsterdam merchants was the head of the firm of Marselis, closely connected with the French government, the ambitious councillor Balthazar Abbema, and prominent with him was Jan Bicker of the old family favouring the States-General. The course of negotiations with England and that of plans for coöperation with France showed that Rendorp's party could not improve the situation. The bloodthirsty language of the hotheads proved how high the exasperation had mounted. There was talk of a bloody revolution to save the republic. But the regents of Holland, who still expected to lead the democratic party by means of the three pensionaries, would not hear to such violence. They wanted to maintain the form of government and only to avert the "spoiling hand" of stadtholder influence. Most willingly would they have seen the separation of the offices of stadtholder and captain-general, the prince to retain only the power of executing orders received from the States-General. Although the pensionaries and regents would not venture upon a bloody revolution, the vanguard of their party numbered many a madcap who dreamed of a general overthrow of the rotten governments. The time was coming when it would no longer seem possible to resist this vanguard. The men around the stadtholder became uneasy. They desired to remain on good terms with Amsterdam and France and hoped to overcome the league of pensionaries by an opposing alliance of the stadtholder's partisans but were hindered by the incapacity of many regents. De Larrey, Van Hees, Van der Hoop, and Rendorp met together often, from November, 1782, until the following spring, in order to suggest plans for improvement to the prince. The grow-



ing discontent of the citizens, the "small people," caused anxiety in this circle, and it was hoped that the prince might be brought to greater activity, to regular deliberation with a council comprising the chief officers of the republic with some able regents. All these plans had little success, as the prince could not be induced to adopt vigorous measures and the stadtholder party had no leader. The "faithful servants and good friends" of the prince saw their advice mostly thrown to the winds. The prince's policy at home and abroad lacked vigour and direction.

In these circumstances the pensionaries in Holland, now leaders of the regents' party, moved more energetically. The secret discussions in the patriotic party went over from April, 1783, under the lead of the Capellens, Abbema, and Bicker, into a meeting at Amsterdam, where seventy regents and citizens took part; a second assembly in August produced a separation between "old well-known" patriots like Hooft, Abbema, the Van der Capellens and "new converts," who were not entirely trusted. In October a new meeting of thirty to forty "fatherland regents," as they called themselves, took place at Amsterdam. These meetings became the party assemblies of the democrats over the whole republic, although a difference of opinion quickly arose concerning the application of democratic ideas. Young hotheads, like Pieter Vreede, the Mennonite preacher Van der Kemp of Leyden, the Leyden town councillor Blok, the Mennonite preacher Wijbo Fijnje of Deventer, the young Frisian regent Van Beyma, the Utrecht law student Ondaatje, the Amsterdam publicist Hespe, could not long agree with Van Berckel and Zeebergh, nor especially with the circumspect Holland regents, who were willing to make use of the movement among the middle class against the stadtholder's authority but had no desire to place the regents under the control of the citizens. The

October meeting arranged "correspondence" between the members with a central office at The Hague. The organisation was begun of free militia corps and of boards of deputies from the citizens. In opposition to the militia mostly commanded by Orange partisans and reformed officers new military companies were formed "to keep off violence from without and within." The free shooters, adorning their unions with such patriotic and liberty-loving names as *Pro aris et focis*, *Pro patria et libertate*, *For our dearest pledges*, chose their own officers without regard to any difference of religion. At the close of 1783 these city companies joined together in the separate provinces, a year later all over the country—a national organisation, not unconnected with that of the "patriotic regents," which proved that many felt gradually like one people with one interest. The free corps repeatedly held "national" meetings at Utrecht, where the general interests of the country and its defence were discussed naturally from a democratic point of view. The citizen deputies had to make known the will of the citizens in opposition to the regents. The cause of democracy had made great progress in the course of the war. The newspaper edited by Hespe, *De Politieke Kruyer*, was the principal organ of the most violent democrats. Everywhere arose patriotic or democratic unions, which acted more or less openly against the regents, finding their members mostly in the middle class, among the Mennonite, Remonstrant, Lutheran, and Catholic citizens, while the aristocratic regents were generally connected with the "great church." These citizens in angry mood had turned away also from Orange, the protector and representative of the aristocratic form of government. Besides among the aristocracy itself and the small army this government found support alone in the lower ranks of the people, which still favoured Orange but could not be stirred up without opening the door to revolutionary



excesses. The sole hope was fixed on the very great number of order-loving citizens, who would not respond to the appeal of the democrats but were as little prepared to follow the corrupt aristocracy through thick and thin—they desired simply a vigorous government that would prevent all disorder. But these citizens, estimated by the young Van Hogendorp at three-fourths of the nation, were seriously shocked in their confidence in the existing government by the course of the war and increasing domestic disturbances. An important matter it was that the prince remained quite beneath his task. He did not think of far-reaching reforms or of suppressing disorder. His attitude in these critical times was weak and unworthy. Drilling with his guards, making love to the ladies, amusing himself with banquets, balls, and other court festivities, where moderation did not prevail, in silly talk seeking distraction from dark thoughts of Charles I.'s fate and of a "retreat" to his Nassau domains, to-day under this, to-morrow under that influence, now stubbornly refusing every concession and not inclined to give up any of his rights, then desperately asking himself and others what must be done, what he must sacrifice, the "eminent head" of the state did not conduct himself as such.

In the beginning of 1783 the situation became worse. Emperor Joseph II., after the death of his mother Maria Theresa succeeding as sovereign of the Netherlands (November, 1780), had visited incognito the republic in 1781 after a journey to Belgium, which he made as "count of Falkenstein."<sup>1</sup> The visit of a sovereign of the southern Netherlands to those neglected provinces betokened something unusual, and Joseph II.'s uncommon personality made the affair more important. It was said

<sup>1</sup> Hubert, *Le voyage de l'empereur Joseph II.* (Bruxelles, 1900).

that he had already declared Ostend a free port and showed a willingness to grant freedom of worship everywhere to Protestants. With interest he had listened to the bitter complaints of Antwerp. People had heard of his plans for the opening of the Scheldt, of his interest in Belgian industry, of a project for regulating the antiquated barrier. The emperor showed himself uncommonly gracious in the republic; he avoided all close contact both with the duke of Brunswick and his adversaries. On his departure from Belgium his plans had become so little manifest that even the governor appointed by him, and his wife, duke Albrecht of Saxony-Teschen and the archduchess Maria Christina, knew nothing of them. Soon Joseph's reforms began, first in ecclesiastical then in political matters, which were suddenly to make the Austrian Netherlands, still ruled according to the ancient privileges and customs of the Burgundian-Spanish time, into a country governed in modern fashion, subjecting church to state, modifying the half mediæval authority in the direction of centralisation. The barrier had also attracted his attention. He was determined to do away with the long row of fortresses and to keep only Antwerp, Ostend, and Luxemburg. This plan might serve to end the republic's humiliating rights of garrison. On November 7th the Austrian government informed the ambassador at Brussels and the States-General at The Hague that the emperor had resolved to demolish most of the dismantled fortresses in the southern Netherlands, and expected the republic to give the necessary orders to the commanding officers. The States-General feigned not to understand, but received from Brussels shorter notice that the affair was to be carried out immediately. The States-General, convinced of the uselessness of the barrier now that the republic's relation to France had entirely changed, offered no further resistance and recalled the garrisons from most of the barrier cities in



January, 1782. These troops, numbering six or seven thousand men, reënforced considerably the small army. The imperial government's method of action was felt as a deep humiliation. Rumours of plans for forcibly opening the Scheldt excited uneasiness among the merchants of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, who dreaded the competition of Antwerp. But the old plan of exchanging the Austrian Netherlands for Bavaria now kept the emperor from such a measure, which might bring about a general European war. He began with another matter, the boundary regulation of Dutch Flanders never decisively fixed since the convention of 1718. In the night of November 3 to 4, 1783, an imperial regiment from Bruges occupied the forts St. Donat, St. Paul, and St. Job near Sluis on the frontier, drove out the Dutch garrisons, and demolished the forts; the corpse of a Dutch soldier was dug up from a cemetery and thrown into the moat of the fort Liefkenshoek. The republic had to submit to this new humiliation, as it was not in a condition to resist. The tone of the Brussels government contrasted sharply with the humble manner, in which the States-General proposed a final settlement of these affairs. The prince would have liked a more decided answer and the gathering of troops, but the patriots in fear of war would not hear to it. Austrian diplomacy had under consideration a plan for ending all differences with the republic by a great quadruple alliance of the maritime powers with Austria and Russia, but the patriots were afraid of it. The opening of the Scheldt remained like a threatening sword over the republic.

It appeared that no longer the prince but the patriots, especially the three pensionaries, had the management of the republic in their hands. The strong association of the patriotic party, supported by France, had made the party supreme. It did not cease attacking the prince's authority. The princess in these circumstances sought

aid from Prussia, but found little comfort there. At the most Frederick II. and his ministers were persuaded to draw up memorials, advising the prince to yield as much as possible to the demands of the patriots, to avoid the appearance of favouring England, to keep friendly with the French court, and to increase his popularity. Nothing was said of the duke, whose relations with the prince were far from broken off, but the prince and princess knew that Frederick II. would not hold out a hand for him. There seemed no longer to be any doubt about the victory of the patriots. Things began to look bad for the duke still residing at Bois-le-Duc. His ambiguous position as Austrian and Dutch field-marshal was with the emperor's attitude not a little dangerous, and the prince of Nassau-Weilburg, his old opponent, stood ready to take from him his post of field-marshal. The princess concerned herself little about him, and he could not depend upon the prince. In the spring of 1784 the cabal against the duke acted with redoubled fury. He was accused of intentionally neglecting the southern fortresses, of treason for the sake of Austria, and finally in April the act of consultation was brought up. Once made known, it caused a profound impression on all sides, and the Estates of Holland, having already sent De Gyselaer, Van Berckel, and the council pensionary to the prince to inquire about Brunswick's attitude in the affair of the frontier fortresses, commissioned these gentlemen to ask about the act existing "according to rumour." The prince exonerated the duke with regard to the first point and on May 24th in a message to the States-General and the different provinces justified the act and took the duke's person under his protection. Then began a new storm against the duke, who was finally to give way before his fierce enemies.

About the time of these events the emperor came out with his demands, making use of the refusal of



France to step into the breach on behalf of the republic. The patriots had hoped that France, their ally, would be ready to bind itself closely with the republic, and the prince also had agreed to this upon the advice of Prussia. With England nothing more was to be done; all hope was fixed upon France. But France hesitated, as it did not wish to be on a hostile footing with the emperor. It would conclude a treaty of commerce but nothing more. The pensionaries proposed to de la Vauguyon a great plan of alliance, by which France, in exchange for a guarantee against an attack upon the republic, might obtain in case of war the disposal of its fleet and colonies. Thus they would have delivered up to France the state bound hand and foot. Then came the emperor on May 4th with his *Tableau sommaire des prétentions*, in which besides the frontier regulation of 1664 he asked: the cession of Maestricht and other territory, removal of the guard ship before Lilloo on the Scheldt, destruction of the Scheldt forts Kruisschans and Frederick Henry, partial destruction of Lilloo and Liefkenshoek, yielding to the demands of private individuals. Was war with Austria now to break out before peace was definitively concluded with England? What would then become of the republic? The Dutch plenipotentiaries were constrained to sign the preliminaries at Paris and agreed to the terms proposed by England and France. The republic's only hope against Austria was the mediation of France. No treaty of peace was more humiliating than that of Paris, none showed the republic in a more disordered condition—a mockery of a state, hopelessly divided in itself, without influence abroad, without power on land and sea, without future, living alone in the remembrance of its great past and in the prosperity left by that past. That prosperity had suffered much during the war and the ensuing year of uncertainty. The neutrals and the English had carried off the commerce of

the republic to their own ports. The southern Netherlands had seized the opportunity and freighted ships from Ostend and Nieuwpoort for foreign countries. Hamburg and Bremen, the German, Danish, Swedish, and Russian ports of the Baltic had derived no less advantage. The two great companies had given up regular communication with the Indies, their trade had suffered heavy losses and had received the finishing stroke. Domestic industry was hit by the stoppage of the importation and exportation of raw materials and products. Without internal strength or external consideration the republic moved rapidly towards a fatal domestic crisis, which might cost its independent existence, now that the three great neighbouring powers meddled so much with its internal affairs.







## CHAPTER XII

### PATRIOTS AND PARTISANS OF THE PRINCE

WITH the peace at Paris the danger of a foreign war was far from over, and, so long as this was the case, it might be expected that the political differences at home—attracting most attention in the history of these years—would retain the character of quarrels rather than end in a civil war. People did not know what the emperor meant with his *Tableau*, that had disturbed the joy over peace with England. But lively enough was the hope of the mediation of France in consequence of the new alliance contemplated with that now friendly power. The French government seemed inclined not to go so far and proposed a defensive alliance with mutual guarantee of all rights and possessions, yet made an exception of the rights disputed by the emperor. In the summer of 1784 the help to be given in case of war was fixed at twelve thousand men and eighteen ships from the French and half of that from the Dutch side. In October the Dutch envoys were empowered by the States-General to sign the treaty, but France, guided cautiously by Vergennes, showed slight desire to do so. The republic had explained its rights in reply to the imperial *Tableau*, but it soon appeared that France was disposed to settle the affair by a middle course. That middle course was indicated also from the emperor's side by a document of August 23d, in which the emperor demanded the opening of the Scheldt, free navigation to India for the southern Netherlands, liberty to fix import and export

duties there, settlement of the boundary. The document was intended as an ultimatum. The States-General were emboldened to an uncommonly rapid display of vigour and rejected these demands a few days later, making ready to prevent by force the opening of the Scheldt and to defend the threatened southern frontier. Both prince and patriots would not hear to any further yielding, and war-ships assembled before Flushing under vice-admiral Reynst to oppose the imperial vessels announced to appear on the Scheldt. The affair remained in suspense over a month, but the imperial ambassador at Brussels, count Belgiojoso, proclaimed officially that about October 6th or 7th vessels would go along the Scheldt from Antwerp and Ostend and that obstruction of this navigation would mean war. On the 8th a ship left Antwerp for the sea, but was greeted by the fire of cannon before Saeftingen and went back; the ship from Ostend, departing for Antwerp on the 15th, was held up at Flushing.

War was at the door. The emperor ordered an army corps sent from Austria to the Netherlands, and the Dutch began preparations in anticipation of the coming of these troops. Forts were garrisoned, frontier districts in Dutch Flanders were inundated, ships were posted on the Scheldt, and German troops were recruited. But who was to conduct the war besides the inexperienced prince? Brunswick could no longer head the army. The impression, aroused by the publication of the act of consultation, had been too profound. On October 14th Brunswick resigned his offices and departed from Boisle-Duc for Aix-la-Chapelle, indignant at the treatment given him and embittered against the prince, who had left him in the lurch notwithstanding all his promises. Thenceforth his correspondence with the prince ceased, and his influence upon the government disappeared. Two years later he went to Brunswick and died in 1788 at



Vechelde of apoplexy. Now who was to take his place as field-marshal at the head of the Dutch army? Neither the prince of Weilburg, nor the Rhine-grave of Salm, colonel in the Dutch army, nor any of the chief Dutch officers was fitted for the post. On the advice of Frederick II. choice was finally made of the experienced French count de Maillebois, who appeared in the following spring at the head of a corps of French officers. The enlistment of German troops to add twelve thousand men to the army, as had been resolved, progressed slowly. Everywhere, however, in the cities and country the militia was reformed; a general taking up of arms was prepared; and free corps were raised to defend the country against the expected attack of the half-wild Hungarians and Croats, the dreaded hussars and pandours of the imperial army. The general arming was not without serious difficulties. In Holland the preliminary registration of the male inhabitants from eighteen to sixty years of age met with resistance from the peasants, who favoured the prince and saw in the affair a patriotic plan to withdraw the army from him and his influence. In January, 1785, here and there was a revolt against the resolution adopted to draw every third man for military service. The Estates prohibited the display of the Orange flag in token of opposition to their measures, but this caused new tumults, while the prince, though disapproving of the insurrectionary movements, objected to the designation of his flag as a sign of rebellion. The Estates of Holland now put down opposition vigorously, accomplished the drawing, punished offenders, and finally forbade expressly the wearing of "ornaments of Orange colour." In the other provinces matters went no further as a rule than the registration, but this occasioned uneasiness for the result in case the emperor should carry out his threats.

The emperor's threats were not carried out. Frederick

the Great had never believed in them, but, unwilling at his advanced age to enter upon a great war, he refused to do anything of consequence for the republic, declaring France to be the proper mediator. France, on account of the condition of its finances, was unable to act vigorously on behalf of the republic. It was ready for mediation, even to warn Austria that it would suffer no attack on the friendly republic. On November 20th such a warning was sent for the second time from Paris to Vienna, where preparations for war were supposed to be making. But old Fritz appeared to have been right. The emperor was occupied with the plan of persuading the ruler of Bavaria, elector Karl Theodor von der Pfalz, to exchange his whole territory for the southern Netherlands, which were then to be elevated to an independent "kingdom of Burgundy." The elector, very devoted to France and by birth half a Belgian, was not averse to this exchange, as France of old preferred a weak, independent little kingdom on its northern frontier to an Austrian or Spanish possession. But the elector was childless, and his heir, Duke Karl von Pfalz-Zweibrücken, was not to be depended upon; this prince, a partisan of Prussia, would not easily consent to the exchange, as the Austrian monarchy, thus possessing a large part of southern Germany, might regain its supremacy over Prussia in the German empire. Frederick II. was ready to use all means to make Joseph's plan fail and endeavoured to bring together the German princes in a *Fürstenbund* against Austria.<sup>1</sup> Joseph II. offered to France, in case of the exchange, an extension of the French frontiers on the side of Luxemburg and Namur, including those important fortresses. At the end of

<sup>1</sup> See Ranke, *Die deutschen Mächte und der Fürstenbund*; Bailleu, *Die Entstehung des Fürstenbunds* (*Hist. Zeitschr.*, Bd. 41).



1784 he transmitted a proposal of this sort to his sister Marie Antoinette. But France demanded the approval of Frederick II. and the heir of the Bavarian states, and there was not much chance of this approval, especially after the German league of princes was formed in the summer of 1785. The plan of exchange, which would have brought some advantages to the republic, fell through. The difference with Joseph must be settled by negotiation with French mediation, and it would have to end in what Frederick the Great called *un pourboire à l'Empereur*. The emperor required for the "illegal" opposition to his ships on the Scheldt an apology from the republic by sending an embassy to Vienna, where there could be further negotiation; only on this condition would he let his troops turn back. A money indemnity seemed impending, some sixteen to eighteen millions, it was said. Upon the advice of France the republic decided in January to adopt this course. The apologetic embassy, consisting of Van Wassenauer-Twickel and Van Leyden, finally appeared at Vienna in June, but was treated with slight consideration, owing partly to the fault of the envoys themselves, who were caught smuggling tea and herrings in their calashes. At last the emperor was satisfied with their humble request in the name of the States to negotiate further at Paris. So the negotiation was resumed there, not without grievances and plans coming constantly from The Hague. The new English ambassador there, the able and energetic Sir James Harris, had a hand in these plans, and opposed to him was no longer de la Vauguyon, who had transferred his task to the less capable count de Vêrac, the tool of his secretary Bérenger, closely connected with the patriotic pensionaries. There was talk of the republic's joining the German league of princes, of a closer alliance with England, of a revolution in the republic in favour of the prince. But the Paris negotiation seemed finally to

hinge upon the brutally simple question: How great shall the fee of the emperor be? If the leading pensionaries with the French government could reduce the amount, the States-General might be induced to accept and get free from the danger of war. The Rhine-grave of Salm came in August to Paris to offer five million guilders in the name of the pensionaries. Vergennes communicated the offer to Austria and gave The Hague to understand that the French government would contribute something. The emperor's demand dropped from twelve to seven millions. Finally the States-General resolved, by a minority of three against four votes, to offer as much more than five millions as the French government should deem equitable. The imperial government requested a definitive answer on or before September 25th, threatening war in case of refusal; the Dutch troops moved southwards, and the prince appeared with Maillebois in Breda to look after the defence of the southern frontier. The pensionaries feared the whole plan would fail. At the eleventh hour came the report that France was ready to help with several millions and the republic need pay no more than five millions. The preliminaries of these terms were signed at Paris on September 20th; the definitive peace was to follow quickly. Then the signing of the proposed alliance with France was expected, as it had not yet been accomplished.

On October 17th the States-General approved the preliminaries of Paris. It came out that France had intended to give only one and one half millions and the republic had counted upon a French contribution of not less than four and one half millions. Peace with the emperor was signed at Fontainebleau on November 8th, the closing of the Scheldt being maintained, but with a sacrifice of the Scheldt forts, which were given to Joseph II.; the frontier in Dutch Flanders was to be that of 1664; Maestricht was kept by the republic. Two



days later the alliance with France was concluded. The misunderstanding regarding the millions to be paid was made known to only a small circle in order not to endanger the ratification, which was effected on December 12th. After much wrangling came a secret agreement that France would really pay four and one half millions and would receive in return from the republic a present of two war-ships. The changed circumstances of the republic and France finally made the present superfluous, and some years later the ships were sold to be broken up. Great was the joy of the friends of France over the "defensive confederacy," which was celebrated by illuminations and other festivities, also by gifts to the leading French statesmen. The alliance with England had brought the state since William III. under the power of its old enemy and almost entirely destroyed its political influence in Europe; that influence was lost in the wretched war and the decline as a commercial power; the alliance with France, so the patriots proclaimed, would restore the glory of former times. The beginning, the humiliating agreement with the emperor brought about by the intervention of France, was far from promising, but it was hoped that the good understanding with France would quickly lead to an advantageous treaty of commerce and that France would help defend the "full freedom" against the attacks on it from the stadtholder party supported by England and perhaps by Prussia. With these illusions based upon the new political system, the future was entered upon *duplici fœdere salva*, as was engraved on a medal in memory of the two treaties.

The patriotic movement had become more and more democratic. The regent aristocracy soon saw itself disappointed in its expectations. With great zeal it had helped to undermine the stadtholder's influence, hoping to drive him from his high position. The alliance with

France seemed to the aristocratic regents a security against plans, favoured by competing England and monarchic Prussia, to develop the stadtholder's power in the direction of monarchy. They saw also in the desire for a "fundamental restoration" of the rights of the people, as understood by them, a chance of maintaining the old republican forms of government, under which the republic had once become great. They agreed with Van der Capellen: "The patriotic party is this nation." But they soon saw that they had yielded too much to their democratic allies. Van der Capellen and De Gyselaer did not think of restoring the old power of the regents. They wanted popular government, the sovereignty of the people as in America, no patching up of the old union, but a renovation of the whole system of the republic's government. Fortune served the democrats in that neither the stadtholder party nor the regent aristocracy possessed leaders of any importance. There was some thought of an agreement between the prince and the patriotic party. Through the mediation of the princess, acting upon the advice of Frederick II., interviews took place in October and November, 1784, between the prince and Van Berckel and De Gyselaer, in which the general condition of the republic formed the subject of discussion. But proper confidence was wanting on both sides, so that little came of this beginning of coöperation but mutual bitterness. So the democratic pensionaries in the course of 1784 were able to get the guidance of affairs wholly in their hands and to carry along with them the aristocratic regents, who did not yet see the danger to their own future of this association. Since the October meeting in 1783 of the patriotic regents there had existed a sort of permanent democratic party government, composed of six pensionaries of Holland: De Gyselaer, Zeebergh, then Van Berckel and Visscher of Amsterdam, Van Wijn of Gouda, and De Kempnaer of Alkmaar, who



were in regular communication with correspondents in the other provinces. The French government instructed its new ambassador to side mostly with the patriots, "because it is to their courage and perseverance that the king is indebted for the change which has been effected in the republic in favour of France."

Meanwhile the power of the prince in Holland had to suffer many blows. Not only were the orange colour, the shouting of *Oranje Boven*, the singing of the *Wilhelmus*, etc., prohibited as signs of rebellion, while his protests were thrown aside by the States-General and by Holland, but encroachments were made on his right of pardon. In Rotterdam, where the militia was being reformed into free corps, riots arose under the lead of a notorious mussel woman, Kaat Mossel, ending in the imprisonment by the justices of this woman and her friend Clasina Verrijn. In 1785, when the patriotic sheriff of the city appealed to the court of Holland, the case came before that court, which took two years more to settle it and by the revolution of 1787 was finally compelled to release the two women, for whose defence the young advocate Willem Bilderdijk had taken much trouble. In one town after another the patriots managed to change the government to suit their ideas, while here the choice, there the recommendation was taken from the prince. They made their friends and partisans triumph in the councils and magistracies and secured for them the most important offices. In the country of Holland as well as in the cities all seditious movements were vigorously suppressed. The new navy department undertook the reorganisation of the fleet, which soon numbered forty ships of the line, but the authority of the admiral-general fell into the background. The "commission of defence," established by the States-General in May, 1785, beside the already existing "secret" department of war affairs of the prince, together with another for revising the quotas of the

provinces, aimed likewise to limit the prince's military power, while Maillebois, with great reforms in mind, could get nothing done. There seemed to be some chance of a better understanding from the intervention of the princess. It was known to her that in the summer of 1784 the pensionaries had made secret overtures at Berlin and had suggested the transfer of the stadtholder's rights to the princess. In the spring of 1785 came other offers from the Utrecht democrats, and for a moment it appeared not impossible that Orange and the democracy might unite against the aristocratic regents. But the princess believed such a combination was impossible; she had no idea of the significance of the democratic movement and saw no salvation in such a coöperation as was proposed to her. Events in Utrecht occasioned a new meeting of the "patriotic regents" at Amsterdam on August 1, 1785, under direction of Capellen van de Marsch and De Gyselaer. At this meeting, where fifty-eight persons were present, a governing committee of seven members was appointed, one from each province, and several matters were taken up, the accomplishment of which was partly attempted in the following year.

In September, 1785, the pensionaries succeeded in striking a great blow. During the customary daily parade of the garrison of The Hague arose a collision between some men in the uniform of The Hague, Leyden, and Schiedam free corps among the spectators and the mob, an affair of no importance. But the patriots spoke of a plot that was hatched to kill Van Berckel and De Gyselaer after the manner of the De Witts. The matter was discussed seriously in the Estates of Holland, and commissioners were authorised (September 8th) to make an investigation and to send around patrols to prevent possible disturbances. The fact, that on a certain night windows were broken in the houses of Pieter Paulus, fiscal of the admiralty of the Meuse, and of other patriots,



seemed of sufficient consequence to justify this measure. The commissioners did what they were told to do and commanded the watch to send out patrols from hour to hour without consulting the prince, who thought himself alone to have the right to give orders to the garrison. The captain of the watch applied to the prince for orders, and the latter, angry at this invasion of his military authority, came to protest to the meeting of the commissioners and the same evening to the meeting of the Estates summoned at his request. But the Estates declared they had a perfect right to give orders to The Hague garrison, whereupon the prince, liking nothing more than his military functions at The Hague, left the city on the 15th with his family. He went first to Breda, and his family departed for Friesland. In his exasperation he declared that he would execute his often cherished project of leaving the country and going to Nassau, but the alarmed princess, supported by the Prussian ambassador von Thulemeyer, dissuaded him from this plan. Thus the prince was temporarily driven from Holland, and the democratic party could take up its plans against the regents. The possibility of resuming negotiations with the princess was not excluded: Pieter Paulus had again approached her with proposals for an agreement with the democrats; Maillebois had offered her his services, if she would take the government into her hands; from Berlin had come hints to the same effect. But she put no confidence in this policy, and she was not moved by the English ambassador, who constantly advised a more vigorous attitude, if necessary a counter revolution with the help of the Orange multitude which, openly appealed to by the prince, would not hesitate, as in 1672 and 1747, to impose its will on the regents, while army and navy would favour the prince.

With Holland now stood Utrecht, especially the strongly democratic capital of the province. The pros-

perous citizens of Utrecht<sup>1</sup> had long been dissatisfied with the rule of the regents settled by the regulations of 1674, fully restored again in 1747. The abuses here under Brunswick's favourite, De Pesters, the arbitrary rule of this lieutenant stadtholder, the exclusion of all who refused to submit to his arrogated authority, his avarice in keeping all the offices for himself and his friends, even for their liveried servants, and offering them for sale, the monstrous spy system had excited aversion to the government and the house of Orange. The partisans of Orange were insulted and annoyed, while Capellen and the free corps, the democratic leaders Ondaatje and von Liebeherr, the young student-poet Bellamy were boisterously applauded. The student Ondaatje, born at Colombo in 1754, an ardent democrat and an eloquent leader of the people, became the chief personage. As early as 1782 there was agitation in Utrecht against the regulations. In the following year the militia was reformed with the aid of a voluntary public enrollment, and a numerous and soon very popular free corps was organised under command of Ondaatje. The spirit of the time was shown in the removal (August, 1783) of the hot-headed Orangeman Van Goens from the town council. No longer safe in his home, Van Goens had to leave the city and retire to The Hague. William V. did not dare give him the employment promised, and the unfortunate Van Goens, hated and despised, misunderstood and deserted, saw himself obliged in 1786 to bid farewell to his fatherland. He never beheld it again and died in solitude at Wernigerode in 1810. The city government was asked to abolish the stadtholder's right of recommendation. The result was that Voet van

<sup>1</sup> On conditions in Utrecht during these years: De Beaufort, *Oranje en de democratie*, in *Geschiedk. Opst.*, ii., p. 34; Davies, *Memorials and Times of P. P. J. Quint Ondaatje*; Colenbrander, ii., p. 190.



Winssen, a patriot, was appointed to the first vacancy. Then it rained petitions to the town council urging reforms and restrictions of the stadtholder's influence. The Estates named (February 25, 1784) a commission of nine persons to examine the regulations of government, and the town governments in April invited the citizens to make known their grievances in writing within five weeks.

Now the democratic movement began to be developed powerfully in Utrecht to the no small alarm of the regents. Ondaatje and his friends drew up the draught of regulations, limiting the stadtholder's influence on the appointment of the government and establishing a board of sixteen citizen commissioners, chosen by the taxpayers in the wards, to represent the citizens in the government and to protect their "ancient and traditional laws and privileges." This document was signed in other cities and even villages of Utrecht. The municipal government consented to the appointment of ten militiamen to investigate grievances and resolved to consider itself continued in office for another year. But Ondaatje and his followers, dissatisfied with the slow course of affairs in the Estates and with the report of the nine presented September 1, 1784, did more. To promote reforms in the province they drew up an "act of qualification," soon signed by over twelve hundred citizens, by which twenty-four "constituted" men were indicated to secure the rights of the people and the redress of grievances. The city government was forced to recognise this new board (February, 1785), soon supported by commissioners of the militia. Thus the democrats understood the idea of "fundamental restoration" to the dismay of the aristocratic patriots, who wanted to reduce the stadtholder's influence but were not prepared to let the influence of the people develop so far. At the filling of a vacancy on March 11, 1785, the dissension became plain. The

Utrecht city council named for the vacant place in its midst the young Sichterman, a respectable but not very able man, whose appointment caused violent protests from the constituted men and the commissioners with the eloquent Ondaatje as speaker. His long address called upon "God, the People, and the Law" against the choice, and the council, though maintaining it, resolved not to admit the elected man to its sittings before the manner of election should be finally settled. This resolution roused indignation among the democrats, who stirred up the people and obtained another meeting of the council in the evening of the same day, when the council, intimidated by the populace before the city hall and by Ondaatje's language, annulled the election. The authority of the regents was thus broken. Nineteen of them resigned from the council and threatened to leave the city. The Estates, composed of the regent aristocracy, threatened to call in the help of other provinces to bring the "hot-heads" to reason. The council, encouraged by this support, retraced its way, allowed the nineteen resigned members to take their seats again, and on March 29th annulled the last resolution, adopted under compulsion, to remove Sichterman. The discouraged Ondaatje resigned as a member of the constituted and officer of the "reformed" militia, but was soon summoned before the sheriff and justices as the chief instigator of the movement. This prosecution excited uneasiness in Utrecht and brought the democrats elsewhere under arms. The third "national assembly" of free corps, gathering in June at Utrecht, promised support. So did also the meeting of the "patriotic regents" under the lead of Capellen van de Marsch early in August, 1785, at Amsterdam. It inspired the Utrecht democrats to oppose the now united partisans of the States and the stadtholder aristocracy, who had to encounter a new difficulty in August. A demonstration of militia and people before the city hall



on the introduction of municipal regulations, which only half-pleased the citizens, forced the government to rescind these regulations and to recognise the commissioners according to Ondaatje's plan. But the reaction quickly began. The occupation of Amersfoort with four hundred troops from Nimwegen at the request of the Estates roused agitation at Utrecht, to which the government had to yield. The city gates were closed and preparations were made for a siege. But the democrats of Holland and elsewhere dreaded civil war, in which the stadtholder with his army would have the best chances. The leaders of the "patriotic regents" in Amsterdam sought to mediate between people and regents in Utrecht. This had little result, as the Estates of Utrecht would have nothing to do with these gentlemen, and the Utrecht aristocracy seemed about to conquer with the help of the old party of the princes, which would have been a heavy blow for the democracy in the whole republic, when on December 19th the citizens again assembled at the summons of Ondaatje and his friends and the militia surrounded the city hall, demanding that the council should adopt the democratic regulations and introduce them within three months. The council replied evasively and separated, but the people remained and called for a new session which took place. With difficulty the council procured a postponement until the next day, when the militia and populace once more encompassed the city hall and forced the council to yield completely. The Estates refused to recognise the consent secured by compulsion, they threatened to transfer their meetings to Amersfoort, and rumours were rife of an occupation of the capital by the stadtholder's troops, but the citizens persisted. On March 20, 1786, the end of the appointed period, the council came together under the eyes of two thousand armed citizens to approve of the popular demand. Twelve of its members took an oath to the democratic

regulations, which were sworn to also by the militia. The Utrecht democracy had thus gained the upper hand and rejoiced over the victory, for which a medal was struck in the style of the time. Ondaatje took his place in the militia again, soon became captain, and then stood actually at the head of the city democracy. From Utrecht, the small province with scarcely seventy-five thousand inhabitants, thirty thousand of them being in the capital, the "fundamental restoration" of the "old rights of the people" was to be conquered from the regent aristocracy of the republic—so the real democrats among the "patriotic regents" hoped.

The patriotic movement in Gelderland was at first of great importance.<sup>1</sup> Although the majority in the Estates favoured the prince, there was much dissatisfaction here also with the placing of foreigners in office, the bestowal of lucrative posts upon favourites of the regents, the suppression of the numerous Roman Catholics, etc., as well as with the general course of the government. Robert Jasper van der Capellen van de Marsch was the leader of the patriotic opposition. His attacks on Brunswick and the prince, on the conduct of the war, on the military jurisdiction left in vehemence little to be desired. He and his friends followed the plan of general requesting discussed in the meetings of the regents and stirred up the citizens of Gelderland at the end of 1782. In the small towns even there was some agitation, especially against the regulations of government, a "national request," drawn up by Capellen and signed by several thousand men, protesting strongly against them in April, 1785. But the Estates of Gelderland had enough of these requests and movements. On May 11, 1786, they passed a resolution prohibiting the circulation of such requests and declared they would not accept any signed by more than six persons. This resolution, described by Capellen

<sup>1</sup> Weststrate, *Gelderland in den Patriottentijd*, Arnhem, 1903.



van de Marsch as worse than the "blood placards," put an end to the requesting and protesting in this province. Most serious were affairs in Elburg and Hattem. Little Elburg numbering scarcely twelve hundred men, the no larger Hattem made themselves talked about in these days, and became known even in France and Prussia. The justice Rauwenhoff and the secretary Vitringa were with two preachers, Van Diermen and Hein, the chiefs of the patriotic majority in Elburg, who formed a drill company early in 1785 and stirred up the community against the abuses in the government. The town government found support in the Estates against the citizen commissioners and citizen war council. In 1785 and 1786 there was repeatedly talk of sending a garrison to the town to support the government. The citizens would not hear to this; they demanded the keys of the gates and the appointment of tribunes, while the people often took part in the sittings of the council and carried through their will. The Orange party opposed, but the patriots of Elburg went on their way, encouraged by the Capellens and the Holland democrats; they even bought ammunition in the summer of 1786, deepened the neglected canals, and strengthened the walls, preparing for defence in case the stadtholder should wish to use force. In Hattem affairs progressed in a like manner under the lead of a young son of a regent, Herman Willem Daendels. Disappointed in his desire to become secretary of the town, he soon conducted a strong opposition to the stadtholder's authority. Drilling began here in 1783, and late in the next year the fortification of the town was taken in hand. The people wanted to "obtain justice and freedom with cold steel." Guilds and citizens called for the appointment of tribunes and demanded their old rights; they besought the prince to nominate young Daendels to the place of his dead father and requested and petitioned at a great rate. But the prince appointed young Dinck-

greve of his body-guard, and this caused new excitement and preparation for defence under the guidance of Daendels.

The prince had settled at Het Loo after going to his wife and family at Leeuwarden and visiting Groningen, which visits struck a blow at the patriotic machinations in Friesland and Groningen, as it appeared that the great majority of the population still favoured the prince. A journey of the princely family to Zealand had brought victory to the stadtholder party there, while the rapid progress of democratic ideas in the other provinces, even in Holland, had led the aristocracy to think of the consequences of their alliance with the democratic elements. More vigour came into the policy of the stadtholder party when Harris, the energetic English ambassador, took up for England the part, which Frederick the Great refused to play from fear of France, and began to support the stadtholder's authority. In the spring of 1786 Harris entered into relations with Rendorp who had vainly attempted to settle the affair of the command of The Hague. Rendorp and Elias, burgomasters of Amsterdam and having won there the majority for their plan to restore the command at The Hague to the prince, thought they were sure also of the majority in Holland. In March the Estates of Holland were to decide on the Amsterdam proposal. But an event occurred that spoiled Rendorp's plan. A turbulent crowd on the 17th attacked the carriage, in which De Gyselaer and Gevaerts, burgomaster of Dordrecht, were to ride through the stadtholder's gate at the Binnenhof, formerly used only by the stadtholder but now opened by resolution of the States. Indignant at this violation of the prince's "ancient rights," which seemed violated also by the demand of military honours for the members of the States going to or from their meetings, by the removal of the prince's arms from flags of the guards,



from the officers' collars, from the post waggons, the people tried to prevent this ride, and there was an insignificant collision, which was called a revolt against the States. Rendorp dared not bring up the affair for discussion, now that the aristocratic regent party was in exasperation over this "Orange riot" and the wig-maker Mourand, who had grasped the bridles of the horses, had brought upon himself a sentence of death, commuted to imprisonment for life.

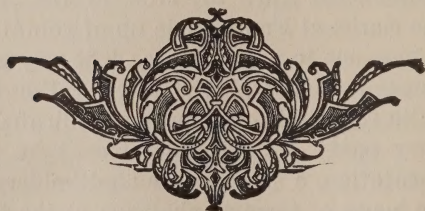
Harris wanted to make the prince take advantage of circumstances. He offered English money, and in Zealand bribery won some regents, as French money had served to promote French plans in the provinces. Thus the wavering and hesitating prince and his party might be driven in the right direction. During the visit of the stadtholder's family to Zeeland in June, 1786, Van de Spiegel, council pensionary of Zeeland, won over the princess for a better understanding of the house of Orange with England. A memorial proposed by him to Harris and only slightly modified was ready, in which England declared the independence of the republic in the regulation of its own affairs and promised support for "the maintenance of the present constitution." This memorial was presented on July 5th and surprised the patriots in the midst of preparation for strong democratic action in the agricultural provinces. The time had now come to put the entire democratic party in motion; it hoped for the support of France, finally convinced by the English memorial of the danger, of which its agents in the republic had often warned it, that the patriots, whom it had to thank for the alliance of November, 1785, might be overcome. The ambassador de Vêrac, who had often advised his government to do something to prevent Prussia or England from action in the republic, and the Rhine-grave of Salm, who again went to Paris in the spring of 1786 to play his ambiguous part, secured

a memorial from France (April 21st), in which it declared it desired to abolish abuses but not to interfere in domestic affairs, although it would not allow others to do so. But a memorial from Prussia appeared (May 15th), speaking of "the rights and prerogatives of the hereditary stadtholderate" and offering to give "its good offices, its counsels, and its intervention . . . to help in assuring to the republic external and internal repose." Thus the neighbouring powers began to busy themselves with the course of affairs, which, as they saw plainly, would soon lead to a crisis, perhaps even to a civil war. And the crisis approached. In July there were discussions between the leaders of the democrats in different provinces and the French embassy. The "citizen corps," bound together as early as June, 1785, by an act of union for the defence of the republican constitution, entered into close connection with the organisation of the "patriotic regents." In Utrecht men were already in arms. In Gelderland began a movement of troops on the stadtholder's side for the purpose of subduing Hattem and Elburg. De Gyselaer in a journey to Utrecht and Gelderland offered to the democrats there the protection of Holland, while the patriots of Friesland, Overijssel, and Groningen promised coöperation. This coöperation, however, was far from being sure. There was a party treasury established April 21, 1786, by the patriotic regents in the National Fund, made up of voluntary contributions of from one to five guilders. The new general Act of Union, signed August 7, 1786, at a meeting of seventy-nine patriotic regents in Amsterdam, indicated what the revolutionary party desired: government by the people with representation, a subordinate stadtholdership hereditary in the house of Orange, abolition of the family government and opposition to democracy outside of representation, support of the true Christian Reformed religion with freedom for other denominations, abrogation of the



illegal regulations of government, disapproval of the use of troops against citizens—all for the maintenance of “the true republican form of government.”

This was the foundation, upon which the leaders of the democracy stood, when they resolved to defend themselves with arms in hand against the violence threatened by the party of the stadtholder. The impending civil war was to be one between the citizen class, asking for a share in the government of the country and led by some democratic regents, and on the other side the stadtholder's government, depending on the lower class of the people, on the army and navy. Between the two stood the old party of the States, the real regent aristocracy, dismayed at the consequences of its own action against the stadtholder government, in Holland and elsewhere hesitatingly and unwillingly following its former democratic allies under the influence of fear of the vengeance of the opposing party, but already inclining to an agreement with the stadtholder's partisans, whenever they should get the upper hand, or whenever the democracy should become too powerful. The course of the civil war was to determine its definitive attitude.





## CHAPTER XIII

### THE CRISIS

THERE was little doubt but that in August, 1786, the parties would oppose one another with arms, both in Utrecht and Gelderland. The prince might be forced to yield. The French ambassador expected this, counting upon the prince's weakness of character and upon the free corps, whose strength he estimated erroneously at fifty thousand men. But the prince's affairs were not in so bad a state. He had in any case four of the seven votes in the States-General behind him; his adherents had taken courage under the lead of Harris and Van de Spiegel and were ready to fight. In Het Loo, where the stadtholder's family now resided, there was hesitation; but the death of Frederick the Great was expected every day, and then the brother of the princess would be king of Prussia and probably inclined to more vigorous action. Hesitation ruled also in Amersfoort, whither some members of the Estates of Utrecht had withdrawn on August 7th and considered themselves as the Estates of the province. The death of Frederick on August 17th and the gracious words, in which the new king, Frederick William II., offered his support, made all hesitation vanish. The Gelderland assembly resolved to request the prince to send soldiers to garrison Elburg and Hattem with a special commission "if necessary to repel force by force." Van der Capellen and other patriotic members of the Estates of Gelderland left that body and called for the help of Holland and the other provinces. But the



prince went on and appointed the general Spengler as commander of the troops, which, numbering nine hundred to one thousand men, were gathered at Apeldoorn. On September 5th all was ready, and Spengler appeared before Elburg and Hattem, where some hundreds of the free corps had come together. Nothing seemed wanting to the "heroic valour" of the men of the free corps, who had left their hearths with the watchword of "dead or free"; they declared they would sell their lives for "the dear fatherland" and the "rights of the free citizen," assailed by the "Nero" of Het Loo and the "brutal Spengler," the "incarnate devil." A lack of leaders in Elburg and Hattem produced very great confusion developing soon into panic. At Elburg before the arrival of the troops the entire garrison dispersed and took to flight, leaving the cannon and many muskets behind; thousands of tears were shed, not a drop of blood. Things went little better at Hattem; the first grenades were answered with small shot from the few defenders; the cannon carried to safety over the Yssel were fired off there but hit nobody. Spengler occupied both towns without difficulty and without loss of life on either side. The Estates of Gelderland had conquered as soon as they had shown some vigour.

Holland made ready for a strong opposition. It sent orders on its own authority to the troops of its quota, mostly stationed in the generality lands, to come back to the province and demanded from the prince an account of his action in Gelderland. When the prince appealed to the invitation of the Gelderland Estates, Holland replied on the 22d with his "provisional" suspension as captain-general. His place at the head of military affairs in Holland was taken by a commission consisting of the three pensionaries, De Kempenaer of Alkmaar, and the lord of Wassenaer-Starrenburg. The States-General, anxious to preserve their credit outwardly, had

besought the prince to let the troops of Holland, the half of the army, go to that province. And the docile prince had consented to the vexation of the troops themselves. There was no doubt but that the army, at the first outbreak between Holland and the prince, would choose the side of the latter, and Holland could only rely upon its free corps, some foreign companies, and the legion of Salm, who aspired to command the troops of the province as "generalissimo." Not fully trusting Salm, Holland put in command of the troops on the frontier the moderately patriotic, pensioned major-general Van Rijssel, whereupon the disappointed Salm went to Utrecht to offer his services. Much depended upon the attitude of France and Prussia. Late in August Prussia sent count von Goertz to the republic to effect a reconciliation of the prince with the patriots, but this negotiation had little success. Coöperation between Prussia and France, while England remained neutral to the despair of Harris, seemed possible, when in November Vergennes sent de Rayneval to the republic also to propose an agreement. De Rayneval and von Goertz deliberated with one another, with the prince, with the democratic and aristocratic leaders. Out of all these deliberations came early in December to the prince a joint proposal of de Rayneval and von Goertz, also in the name of the pensionaries of Holland. The prince was to request the cessation of his suspension in Holland, to withdraw the troops from Amersfoort, Hattem, and Elburg, to give up the regulations of government. In consultation with the princess, Van de Spiegel, and the Gelderland Estates the prince refused curtly this "ignominy" to the vexation of both Prussia and France. Von Goertz went away displeased, and de Rayneval, enraged at the prince's "imbecility," entered into closer relations with the Holland pensionaries, who now hoped for French support of the democratic demands, which were further



developed in Paris by himself, the agent Coëtloury, and Salm. They found great disorder at Paris in consequence of the meeting of the States-General and foreign affairs no longer managed by Vergennes but by the incapable Montmorin, a creature of the frivolous courtier Calonne, who ruined things in the spring of 1787 and by his faults prepared the great revolution.

Amidst these foreign intrigues the democracy in Holland spread its wings to the deep dismay of the aristocratic regents inclining more and more to the prince's side. The free corps, in their national meeting at Utrecht on November 15th, demanded the "fundamental restoration"; the "patriotic regents," assembled in October also at Utrecht, went over more to the democracy and made ready for civil war. On January 30, 1787, Haarlem in the Estates proposed the appointment of a commission not only to investigate the limits of the executive power in the province but also to settle "general maxims" regulating "popular government by representation." The pensionaries saw no other chance of carrying out their plans than by changing the composition of the town councils and governing boards. They determined to ask the approval of the French government, but the latter wished first to bribe the opposing regents and sent Salm with a large letter of credit, as it did not want to strike its old friends of the aristocratic regent party and felt only aversion to the democracy. De Rayneval, naturally the adviser in Paris, hoped to keep the Amsterdam regents and the wavering lords in Friesland and Utrecht from throwing themselves into the stadtholder's arms. In Amsterdam the militia, appearing before the city hall on April 3d, compelled the council to leave the municipal deputation to the Estates henceforth to the pensionaries Van Berckel and Visscher. In April Amsterdam obtained "constituted men" chosen by the societies, the militia, and the free corps, as most

cities already possessed them. The Orange party no longer sat still but began stirring up the common people favouring Orange—the patriots called them the “Orange rabble”—against the mostly patriotic citizen class. Around the prince’s birthday (March 8th) the Orange partisans made disturbances in different cities, of which the secret instigation was to be sought in Bentinck van Rhoon, always in consultation with Harris, and the turbulent noblemen of Gelderland. Here and there Orange societies were founded as a counterpoise to the patriotic unions and as centres of the expected reaction. In Zeeland there were many signatures to an “act of association” in the prince’s behalf drawn up by Harris and Van de Spiegel. In Amsterdam the prince’s party believed it could rely on the “shipwrights,” including not only the workers of the docks and wharves but also the sailors of the navy and merchant marine. Estimated at from seven to twelve thousand persons, they were willing to act for the prince but not for the regents. So the coalition between prince partisans and aristocratic regents encountered difficulties. The democrats recognised now that “removal” was the only way of getting Holland under their control. On the 21st of April they called out the militia and free corps in Amsterdam, occupied the Dam and the city hall, and demanded from the council the dismissal of nine of its members. The sparsely attended meeting yielded, and the nine deposed members remained away under protest. A few days later the removal took place at Rotterdam of seven members, immediately replaced by seven unsuspected patriots. Now the democrats had the majority in the Estates, which after some talk acknowledged the new patriotic deputations as legal. The victory of the democracy in Holland encouraged its friends in Utrecht and elsewhere, who could now hope for armed help from the powerful province against the prince’s army.



In November, 1786, the prince with his family had moved from the badly protected Loo to the safe Nimwegen, where he resided in the ancient Carlovingian castle of the Valkhof. Nimwegen now became the centre of the movement in favour of the prince kept going by Harris and the few active members of the party. When at the end of April Holland made preparations to let its troops cross the Utrecht border, the States-General dared to forbid this. A number of officers, putting the command of the States-General above that of Holland, were dismissed by the latter, disorganising the regular troops. Holland's plan of invading Utrecht brought the Estates at Amersfoort to action in conjunction with the prince, and they ordered their troops under general Van der Hoop to cut off the city of Utrecht from Holland. Civil war now began, and a fight near Vreeswijk between a division of the little Amersfoort army and a detachment of Utrecht citizens resulted in favour of the latter (May 9th). Holland had its troops really move into the province of Utrecht, and Salm took command of the regulars and free corps assembled in the threatened city. There were skirmishes in the environs of Utrecht, and affairs did not look hopeless for the patriots. But want of money quickly forced them to ask help from France. It appeared that France was not in a condition to carry out a vigorous policy in opposition to the aid for the prince expected from the English and Prussian side. The French government declared its willingness to interfere, but only at the request of the States-General, which was equivalent to a refusal. So the cause of the democrats stood still, as they did not dare to venture further without France. Little more progress was made on the prince's side. On May 26th he increased the number of his written memorials with a tedious declaration. It was apparent that he would have nothing to do with the democracy, while there was some

understanding between the common people favouring the prince and the regent aristocracy. If the prince could have been brought to vigorous action, it would have been better for his affairs. Harris, who had just gone to England to seek the support of Pitt, the Gelderland noblemen, the young courtiers urged on the prince, but as usual he was only ready "to lend himself to everything," not to act for himself. Comprehending that it was time, Harris took the lead into his own hands at the beginning of June. He called together the Orange leaders at The Hague and demanded energetic action of the majority in the States-General and of the troops against Utrecht, for which he promised a considerable sum of money from the English government; if necessary, the four provinces of the majority in the States-General could declare themselves a separate state, independent of Holland, Utrecht, and Overijssel. But the Orange party at The Hague did not dare. When Van de Spiegel came over on the 6th from Zealand, more vigour was shown. The prince went to Amersfoort at the head of Van der Hoop's army. In Holland the confusion increased, and whole regiments went over to the prince. Holland appointed a commission of five members to protect the province and to replace the deserting soldiers by free corps, which "commission of defence" established itself at Woerden.

Matters stood thus at the beginning of June: the prince with his army hesitating at Amersfoort, disinclined to attempt the attack on Holland desired by the princess and the party of action, preferring to give up and retire to Nassau, which seemed to Van de Spiegel a shameful flight, unworthy of the "illustrious ancestry" of the stadtholder's family; Holland in confusion, distrusting itself and its friends. The execution of another plan, that the prince with a numerous suite should suddenly appear in The Hague to work upon the States-



General and the adversaries of the democracy, he considered injudicious so long as he was not formally summoned. The princess had previously offered to go to The Hague with her sons or her daughter, but the idea was rejected as bringing her personally into danger. Not knowing what to do, the prince called for her advice. She came from Nimwegen to Amersfoort, where the various possibilities were once more examined. Finally the brave woman again proposed to go to The Hague to offer mediation. The prince now consented, and the princess departed immediately for Nimwegen, from where on June 28th she began her journey to The Hague. The secret was not completely kept. The order for post horses for a considerable company on the border was reported to the Gouda regent, De Lange van Wijn-gaerden, who became suspicious and warned the commission at Woerden, whereupon a detachment of citizens was placed on the road between Schoonhoven and Haastrecht with orders to let no persons pass, "whose coming might be harmful to the peace." The princess, accompanied by a court lady and a chamberlain, approached through Tiel and Nieuwpoort with two court carriages, furnished with footmen and preceded by the officers Bentinck and Stamford. At Schoonhoven they crossed the river without being molested, until towards evening an hour after leaving that town they were stopped by the guard there stationed. The princess was courteously treated and brought by the commander to a farm, where she was requested to wait for the orders of the hastily warned commission of Woerden. This body declined to let her pass without authority from the Estates. She remained at Schoonhoven, where she took leave of the commission, giving thanks for the regards shown her, in which only a rude citizen lieutenant had been somewhat lacking. Next morning she sent a report of what had occurred to the council pensionary and the

clerk, requesting communication to be made to the Estates of Holland and the States-General. The latter desired the admission of the princess. Holland, approving the conduct of the Woerden commission, answered the princess that no resolution had been taken concerning her admission. She departed on the 30th for Leerdam, from fear of the attitude of Salm, who with hussars, sharpshooters, and artillery had hastened from Utrecht to Woerden to proffer his services; here she received at last the reply, that she could not be admitted, and travelled back to Nimwegen.

This sensational affair accelerated the solution of the difficulties so long besetting the republic. The detention of the princess made a deep impression upon the Prussian court.<sup>1</sup> Soon it was learned that she had safely returned, but Frederick William II. wanted to demand full satisfaction for the insult and to support this demand with a show of arms. If England should side with the majority in the States-General, as seemed probable from Harris's attitude, it would have to go to war with France and perhaps also with Prussia. The question was whether Prussia would coöperate with France or with England. The demand for satisfaction in the name of Prussia was made on July 10th upon Holland by the ambassador von Thulemeyer, who inclined to coöperation with France. Counting upon French aid, Holland declared it could not punish, where no insult had taken place. This answer displeased the king, and he gave orders immediately to collect an army of twenty thousand men at Wesel, offering the command of it to the reigning duke Charles William Ferdinand of Brunswick. Finally the Prussian government was persuaded to take

<sup>1</sup> Colenbrander, iii., p. 229. See also Bailleu, *Graf Herzberg* in Bd. 42 of the *Hist. Zeitschrift*, and Pierre de Witt, *Une invasion prussienne en Hollande*, the former taken from Prussian, the latter from the Paris archives.



the course laid out by Hertzberg and separate from France in order to go with England. The king desired to exhaust all mild measures towards Holland. A second memorial from Prussia demanded (August 7th) satisfaction again, more earnestly on account of the threatening military preparations, against which the patriots, relying upon France, only heard French plans spoken of remotely and of a gathering of troops at Givet. The French government wrote to Berlin to prevent a Prussian invasion, but it advised Holland at the same time to ask for the mediation of Prussia in domestic affairs—a proof that it felt too weak to do anything. The recall of de Vêrac in these days of crisis, leaving the conduct of the French embassy to the secretary Caillard, showed that France began to shrink from responsibility. More and more given over to the democrats, Holland would not hear to Prussian mediation. Upon the advice of the French government Holland with a majority of one vote (September 8th) consented to a last attempt to satisfy Prussia by declaring that it would permit the visit of the princess, as soon as it could take place without danger, but it denied all thought of an insult to her.

It was too late. Prussia was already won over to the desire of the princess to maintain the demand for satisfaction and to put it in the form of an ultimatum. The taking of authority from the Woerden commission and an immediate invitation from Holland to come to The Hague would satisfy the princess; she would gratefully propose the joint mediation of the three powers to end internal dissensions. Brunswick, put in possession of the ultimatum by the Berlin government, sent it, as soon as he was ready for the invasion, to von Thulemeyer at The Hague, and the latter presented it to the council pensionary (September 9th), demanding an answer within four days. Great was the consternation in Holland, which had counted upon a contest with the stad-

holder's army but not upon one with Prussian troops led by an experienced general. It was thought that France would still help. So the ultimatum was rejected, and a courier was dispatched to Versailles for "immediate assistance." People did not really believe the Prussian threats were in earnest. They were mistaken. On the 13th the Prussians crossed the frontiers near Nimwegen.

The campaign that followed was nothing less than a triumphal march of the Prussian troops, promoted by the coöperation of the Orange party and the increasing disorganisation of the patriots.<sup>1</sup> The first corps under general von Knobelsdorf with the duke himself moved through the Betuwe upon Gorkum, which had been put at the eleventh hour under Alexander van der Capellen, formerly an officer of the prince's guard and his chamberlain. The second division under the general Gaudi marched by way of Arnhem left and right of the Rhine upon Nieuwpoort and Schoonhoven, Vianen and Vreeswijk. The third under general von Lottum was to threaten Amsterdam with numerous cavalry. Utrecht, which had taken no part in the insult to the princess, must be left on one side for the time being. This city, defended by Salm with seven thousand men and two hundred cannon, was the bulwark of Holland relied upon by the patriots, so the Prussian plan of attack confused the defence. Salm saw his hope of playing a decisive part spoiled. He determined to evacuate the city and secured the approval of the commission at Woerden. At the last moment came an official report that the French government was really about to help and had recalled

<sup>1</sup> See Knoop in *Gids*, 1876, ii., pp. 209 and 443, and Colenbrander, iii., p. 257. On the Prussian side: von Pfau, *Geschichte des preuss. Feldzugs in der Provinz Holland* (1790); on the French side: de Witt, *Une invasion prussienne en Hollande* (1882).



its ambassador from Berlin; the French army supposed to have been collected at Givet might aid in defending the frontier of Holland. Salm acted ambiguously and hastily evacuated Utrecht, which was at once occupied by the stadtholder's army. The Woerden commission resolved to go with its troops to Amsterdam, which might long be defended by inundation, and to evacuate all frontier fortresses south of Woerden except Gorkum. But Gorkum did not hold out; on September 17th it was bombarded and surrendered after considering a few hours; the commander and the garrison were made prisoners of war.<sup>1</sup> The other deserted Holland lines were occupied by the Prussians and on the 19th the prince appeared at Schoonhoven ready to go to The Hague. It was not long before he made the journey. In conjunction with the Woerden commission the three pensionaries had called together the Estates of Holland for the morning of the 15th. The majority came and resolved to follow the commission to Amsterdam in order to remain there under protection of the free corps and the still faithful troops and to oppose the enemy until the promised French army should bring deliverance. The cautious council pensionary, who had long been weary of the yoke of the pensionaries, though he showed himself their tool, postponed deliberation on the removal to Amsterdam until the 17th. On this day only six cities came to Amsterdam; eight remained at The Hague with the nobility and the council pensionary; the others did not appear.

On September 18th the people of The Hague became tumultuous, fraternised with the garrison, decorated themselves with the Orange colour, began to plunder, and shouted *Oranje boven*. The Estates of The Hague repealed the resolution against the orange colour and,

<sup>1</sup> He was soon taken to Wesel and so badly treated there, that he died in December.

while the uproar approached the Binnenhof, began in the evening to deliberate upon the revocation of the other resolutions. Though lacking a quorum, the meeting voted a "provisional fiat" on the proposal to repeal everything and to invite the prince to The Hague. He came on the 20th, enthusiastically greeted by the multitude, whom he pointed out triumphantly to Bleiswijk standing near him in one of the windows of the Binnenhof with the words: "There is now the voice of the people, Mynheer council pensionary!" Elsewhere also the revolution was accomplished in a few days without serious difficulty. Amsterdam alone remained, and if it had persevered, there might have been some chance of the intervention of France. But things went badly at Amsterdam for the patriots. The Amsterdam government was ready for a settlement, and the "conference" of the six cities—they dared not call themselves Estates—grew less with the defection of one city after another. France, threatened by England in a circular to the courts with war in case it should want to help the patriots with an army, was not in a condition to wage war. The French government had to acknowledge to the patriotic ambassador from Amsterdam its complete inability to do anything, so that it advised the best capitulation possible. Prussia and England joined in the convention of October 2d to regulate the affairs of the republic without France. Relying upon its six thousand armed citizens, its strong walls, its cannon, its inundations, and the numerous fugitives, Amsterdam had refused Salm and his legion from Utrecht, so that the intriguer, seeing his part played out, fled by ship to Jever. At the head of the defence the city put the experienced de Ternant, who had fought in America and had come with Maillebois; but he would only remain if French aid arrived. He organised the defence, placed the cannon at threatened points, started the first inundations, and made ready for a siege. Mean-



while the Amsterdam government began to negotiate in order to gain time for the still expected French intervention. A deputation from Amsterdam spoke with Brunswick and obtained a truce; then there was an embassy to the princess with an offer of satisfaction, but the princess rejected the offer as insufficient. The Prussians began the attack on October 1st, and in consequence of a flank movement at Halfweg it was immediately successful, so that the defenders after hard fighting were driven back. A bombardment of the city was impending, though Brunswick dreaded the "great inundation" from cutting of the dikes, by which he would have been forced to retreat. But the government and the citizens began to lose courage. They negotiated at The Hague and reluctantly gave way amid increasing confusion in the city, until finally on October 3d a letter from the French government was received with the report that it had "a multitude of obstacles" in furnishing help to Amsterdam. This decided the affair, and on the same day Amsterdam submitted to the resolutions adopted in the meeting of the Estates. Brunswick consented to the occupation of the Leyden gate alone; the defenders dispersed; the "removed" members of the government took possession again of their posts; some patriotic newspapers were suppressed, while the orange colour was allowed everywhere. It cost some trouble to disarm the citizens, which was done only under the protection of a garrison of two thousand men requested of the prince by the government. Many patriotic leaders and members of free corps deemed themselves no longer safe and fled to Belgium and France.

Now the question was, what satisfaction should be given to the princess, so that the Prussians would leave the country, and what guarantees should be provided against a repetition of the disturbances which must have led to a civil war? Only after an answer to these ques-

tions could the crisis be considered as ended, that had brought the republic to the verge of destruction. It was not long before these things were settled. On October 6th the Estates of Holland asked humbly what more the princess desired. She demanded the dismissal of all "authors" of her arrest, disarming of the free corps, discharge of the persons taking the places of the removed regents, the right to prosecute for misdemeanour against the laws of the state, so that "a rod of terror" would hover "over the heads of these factitious leaders," as Harris says, who appeared more and more as the adviser of the restored government. She added soon a list of the "authors," in all seventeen persons, who might on the 11th hear their sentence. The Prussian army did not yet depart, because the king wished payment by Holland or Amsterdam of the expenses incurred by Prussia in the war. Agreement was reached upon a "present" of half a million from Holland to the army, avoiding the name of war costs or indemnity. Brunswick hastened to lay down the task which he had undertaken with reluctance; although the princess would have liked less haste, he withdrew in the middle of November with most of his army to Wesel. At the request of the States-General four thousand of his troops under general Kalkreuth remained to support the disordered Dutch army in curbing the excesses of the populace and some garrisons thirsting for plunder. The Prussian troops in this respect gave reason for complaint, especially in the country. There was still much to be done. The governments of the cities of Holland had to be changed, as prescribed by the princess. This was effected by virtue of a resolution of the States (October 31st). From place to place, beginning with Amsterdam, young Bentinck van Rhoon and the aged councillor Meerens went around to execute the "removal" and to regulate the affairs of the guilds and militia. From all regents, governing bodies, civil



and ecclesiastical officers, guild brothers and men of the militia, from all new citizens in Holland according to Van de Spiegel's plan an oath was required, by which they swore to the sovereignty of the States and to the hereditary stadtholdership on the basis of 1766, declared by the States as the "essential part of the constitution and form of government." The similar "act of guarantee," signed by all the provinces on June 27, 1788, was like a Perpetual Edict in favour of the stadtholder. It proclaimed "the high and hereditary dignities" as an "essential part not only of the constitution of each province but of the whole state," a "fundamental law indispensable for peace and security." This peace and security seemed not yet sufficiently assured by the changes in governments and officials; the democratic requests and meetings and the effusions of the press had to be suppressed. The court of Holland in September had begun an investigation into the "illegal meetings" and the participants in them, into the signers and makers of requests, etc. This threatening measure for the patriots caused many to fly from the country, and the plan of amnesty, presented to Holland by the prince November 21st, with its numerous exceptions, drove many more persons with their families over the borders. The amnesty finally proclaimed, February 15, 1788, showed more moderation than the plan, but many were still excepted. During a few years the patriots were everywhere persecuted; some ventured then to return, but most of the fugitives remained abroad, filled with wrath against the reaction that had forced them from home. The number of the emigrants is estimated at not less than forty thousand, including women and children, the larger part going to Belgium and France, some settling in America, Germany, England, Russia. Thus ended the fatal strife of parties that had troubled the republic for five years. The manner of its ending presaged little

good for the future. The victory of the Orange party was only obtained by foreign interference and sealed by reactionary measures which did not fail to bring sad consequences. The patriotic disturbances had sprung from the necessity of a reform of state and society, deeply felt during three quarters of a century and advocated by the best men. The party finally prevailing, which now had all the power in its hands, must show whether it possessed the strength to subject rotten institutions to thorough reform, whether it would have the courage to make personal and class interests give way to the general interest. If it did not succeed in this and all remained as before, the fate of the republic was signed and a new revolution was to be expected, more destructive in its action and results than the one now stopped in its beginning. But, as Mirabeau consoled a complaining patriot, he and his party could "prepare, wait for, and seize circumstances." And this they were to do.







## CHAPTER XIV

### THE RESTORATION

SO the cause was settled in favour of the stadtholder's preponderance in the republic existing since 1747. But this result was obtained with foreign help, and it was to be feared that the two powers giving help—Prussia by its army, England by its support to the stadtholder party and threatening attitude towards France—would want to be paid for their coöperation by the establishment of their influence on the republic's internal affairs. Complete restoration was to be expected of the "old system" of a close connection with England and rupture of the French alliance. Prussia would take the place of Austria now siding more with France; the new league of the maritime powers would derive strength from alliance with the Prussian monarchy, certainly superior to Austria in military importance. This coincided with the English policy on the continent, adopted by Pitt at the instigation of Harris, and with the policy of the Prussian minister Hertzberg, convinced as he was that a close alliance between Prussia and England, with the republic as a bond of union and the German league of the princes as a further support, might assure the peace of Europe despite the plans of Russia, France, and Austria. Events in Holland thus stood nearly connected with general European political relations, and the victory of the Anglo-Prussian alliance was of great importance. Prussia did not desire to strengthen England's influence in the

republic. Von Thulemeyer was replaced by the energetic von Alvensleben, who was commissioned to balance the influence of England and France in the republic so that the decision would fall to Prussia. He was to enable Prussia to make a treaty with the republic independent of England. No triple alliance with Prussia and the republic was desired by England from fear of becoming too deeply involved in continental affairs. On the other hand the party now predominant in the republic wanted a triple alliance with guarantee of the state's possessions and the existing form of government. Van Bleiswijk had been so mixed up in past events, that he could not possibly keep his place any longer. It was evident who his successor must be. At the request of Harris and the princess, who had learned to appreciate highly Van de Spiegel's abilities in the latest complications, the post was offered him, but he showed reluctance to enter upon "that wide field full of thistles and thorns." His appointment was unanimous, and on December 3d he exchanged his Zealand post for the most important ministry in the republic. Van de Spiegel, a man of uncommon intelligence, of great moderation, of spotless integrity and patriotism and energy, seemed the right person to take the helm of the disabled ship of state. With Harris he made use of the political circumstances to bring the two powers to the alliance, upon which the republic relied for maintenance of its international importance and domestic peace. Prussia would only conclude a defensive league with the republic for twenty years; in wars across the sea it reserved the choice between financial aid and troops, but in Europe it was to help with 10,000 infantry and 2000 cavalry; the republic might furnish half as many or only help in money; the money compensation was fixed at 100,000 guilders for each thousand of infantry and 120,000 guilders for each thousand of cavalry; the guarantee proclaimed that the king would



protect the hereditary stadtholdership as well as the post of hereditary governor in each province. The republic postponed the signature until its alliance with England was ready. This was the case on April 15th. The English treaty comprised twelve articles. It was also a defensive alliance with a stronger guarantee of the form of government; the help was fixed at 8000 infantry, 2000 cavalry, and 20 war-ships from England, against 5000 men, 1000 cavalry, and 16 ships from the States, while money might be substituted for troops.

Somewhat later the long desired alliance between England and Prussia was brought about. This treaty was signed on August 13th, and it aimed mainly at a joint protection of the republic. Thus the republic's position in Europe was confirmed, and it appeared henceforth in European politics leagued with the two great powers as its protectors—not a very honourable attitude but affording security against foreign complications. It had been Van de Spiegel's purpose to bind the two powers to the republic and to one another without displeasing France by a formal triple alliance. Events in the north and east, in France and Belgium, were soon to show that the republic needed support. With vivid interest Van de Spiegel watched the rapid development of remarkable occurrences in France, which were to lead to a great revolution. No less attentively he followed the war waged by Russia and Austria against Turkey. The republic now sought to mediate and to exhort to peace. Van de Spiegel's prudent policy aimed to restore or preserve peace everywhere, so necessary for the weakened republic and its fallen commerce. He wanted diplomatic agents appointed to the chief small courts of Germany; with England he tried to keep the balance in the north, endangered by the ambitious Gustavus III. of Sweden; he mediated in a dispute between England and Spain over the northwest coast of America; he en-

deavoured to moderate the Russian and Austrian demands on Turkey and to settle the dissensions between Austria and Prussia. In this way he brought again some political consideration to the republic. But the Belgian conditions excited the most interest. The visit of Joseph II. to the Austrian Netherlands had convinced him of the necessity of reform.<sup>1</sup> He resolved to introduce reforms as speedily as possible, counting upon the support of the citizen class as in his other states. The already limited power of governor and governess, the emperor's representatives in Brussels, duke Albrecht and archduchess Maria Christina, were but slightly considered. Unfortunately for the emperor he first directed his attention to the improvement of ecclesiastical conditions which he, more of a philosopher than a believer, wished to put under strict supervision of the state. Notwithstanding warnings from many sides, Joseph issued on October 13, 1781, a "patent of toleration" for all his states, which granted freedom of worship and political rights to others than Roman Catholics—something unheard of in these provinces for two centuries. Soon came other measures. An imperial decree prohibited the influence of foreign orders on the convents; another subjected the commands of pope and bishops to the sovereign's approval; a third abolished "useless" convents. The emperor regulated appointments to ecclesiastical offices, secularised the marriage law, had the monastic estates examined, prepared a new division of the parishes, substituted a general fraternity in place of many small brotherhoods, confined processions and other ceremonies within the churches, and (October 16, 1786) replaced the seminaries of the bishops by two general state seminaries for the education of ecclesiastics. This last resolution excited serious opposition, but finally the

<sup>1</sup> Schlitter, *Die Regierung Josefs II. in den Oesterreichischen Niederlanden* (Wien, 1900).



Belgian clergy gave way and sent their pupils to the new seminaries at Louvain and Luxemburg. No less violent was their hatred of the government.

The talented monarch's plans for improving the administration of the government and justice were equally far-reaching. He encountered the resistance of the conservative governor and strict Roman Catholic governess, who complained of the ecclesiastical measures and of the great power of the emperor's new minister at Brussels, count Ludwig Belgiojoso, a violent man, sympathising with the imperial plans of reform, as did also Kaunitz, the leader of the Austrian policy. Emperor Joseph wanted to form a strong central government by consolidating the three great councils and the secretaryship of state into a "general council" under the lead of the emperor's minister at Brussels. The provincial Estates were to see their influence almost lost in the new division of the country into nine "circles," each under an intendant, with commissioners at the head of the subdivisions or districts. Reforms were to go into effect on November 1, 1787. The emperor reformed the antiquated administration of justice by establishing a sovereign council at Brussels as a court of revision, with two courts of appeal at Brussels and Luxemburg, and sixty-four tribunals. New legislation was prepared by the chancellor of Brabant, Crumpipen, in consultation with the emperor, Belgiojoso, and the jurist Leclerc. With May 1, 1787, this was all to be brought into operation. The whole country was violently agitated. Nobles and patricians, injured in rights enjoyed for centuries, sided with the clergy. The provincial Estates protested against the attack on the old form of government and privileges just sworn to by the monarch; it rained remonstrances, protests, petitions; halls and churches resounded with vehement utterances against the plans of reform. The emperor had expected some oppo-

sition, but not such an opposition as now arose on all sides. People were weary of being treated as an insignificant annex of the Austrian monarchy. Hence resistance in all ranks and classes—the first beginning of a Belgian nationality. It commenced with a student riot at Louvain. Three hundred Brabant and Flemish students created a disturbance at the opening of the lessons (December 1, 1786) in the new seminary by loudly objecting to the government professors and their “heretical” opinions concerning the rights of the church; they demanded restoration of the bishops’ seminaries and rioted publicly, the governor using a military force against them. Evidently the higher clergy had a hand in this cabal, and the papal nuncio at Brussels was not innocent. The latter was removed from the capital. The submission of the clergy was only in appearance, and they continued zealously to stir up discontent with the emperor’s reforms among the nobility, magistrates, and people, secretly helped by some influential personages in the government at Brussels. In the spring of 1787 the provincial Estates opposed the innovations more vigorously. Those of Brabant in April refused collection of the taxes, if infringements on the *Joyeuse Entrée* were not stopped. At the head of the Brussels citizens stood the energetic advocate Van der Noot, a popular orator, who set up the ancient rights of the people guaranteed by privileges over against the centralising plans for strengthening the imperial power. Nobility and clergy, now supported and soon led by the citizens, were emboldened to more violent resistance. The three estates in unison demanded the maintenance of the *Joyeuse Entrée*, the palladium of their liberty. People spoke openly of taking up arms to defend old rights. The same opposition was encountered among the inflammable Walloons in Hainaut and Namur, even in quiet Luxemburg, while increasing agitation portended little better in Flanders



enervated by long subjection. There was talk of bringing about the annexation of the Austrian Netherlands to France.

The Brussels government became greatly embarrassed. It saw the necessity of concessions and suspended some of the resolutions, which could not be displeasing to the governor, who had shown little liking for the reforms. Intimidated by the multitude gathering before the palace on May 30th, and threatening riot, pillage, and death, the governor and governess, to whom people even wished to offer the independent sovereignty, promised to repeal them all and to do away with the changes made in the government of Brabant during the last two hundred years. In the other provinces also everything was set aside. Van der Noot was the actual leader of affairs in Belgium, and he united the triumphant opposition into a power highly dangerous to the plans of the imperial government. But how would the emperor, then visiting the empress Catherine in the Crimea, receive these happenings? He disapproved of them and reproached the Brussels government with cowardice and irresolution. He ordered the minister prince Kaunitz, at the head of affairs in Vienna, to summon deputies from the provinces to Vienna, and called there also the governor and governess besides Belgiojoso, who seemed to have lost his head. The Estates applied to France for help in maintaining their privileges, which was refused by Louis XVI., who had not the slightest wish to provoke his brother-in-law and ally. The retention of the provinces for the dynasty was at stake. Placed in a false position, the governor and governess soon left Brussels, transferring the government at Joseph's request to the commander of the troops, general count Murray. Finally the deputies reached Vienna, but were treated with little cordiality, though the emperor promised not to introduce the reforms without their consent.

Excitement increased in Brussels to revolutionary violence, and in September, 1787, Van der Noot was no longer master of the situation, while Murray prepared to use the troops. A misunderstanding in Brussels brought about on September 20th a bloody encounter between soldiers and citizens. Murray restored order, but appeared not equal to his arduous post and was soon replaced by count Trauttmannsdorff, a young diplomatist, who, supported by the new commander, general d'Alton, was to restore the imperial authority and was invested with power to impose his will.

Thus stood Belgian affairs, when the authority of the stadtholder was established in the republic by Prussian arms. Now the government of the republic could devote more attention to things in the south. It was not a matter of indifference, whether the southern Netherlands remained in the hands of the Hapsburg dynasty, or were united with France, or should become a separate state—the old questions of Louis XIV.'s time in a new form. Van de Spiegel would have liked to see the rising suppressed at its birth and, when this appeared impossible, he wanted to prevent France from becoming master of the southern provinces. The establishment by the three powers of an observation corps of thirty or forty thousand men in Dutch Brabant was advocated by him, but was not favoured by Prussia and England. Trauttmannsdorff, commanded by the emperor to maintain the situation existing on April 1, 1787, including the resolutions adopted up to that time, demanded this of the council of Brabant, and when it did not proclaim the new decrees, he ordered the proclamation on January 22, 1788, within twenty-four hours. D'Alton concentrated his troops, and after the bloody suppression of a riot at Brussels the council consented to the proclamation. Then the governor and governess returned to Brussels. Excitement among the population did not cease, and the



clergy and the Estates continued to resist. The emperor ordered vigorous action and in January, 1789, prohibited further meetings of the Estates in Brabant and Hainaut. In the last session of the Brabant Estates on January 26th, when Trauttmannsdorff referred threateningly to the troops close at hand and exhorted to obedience in violent language, the third estate refused. The same happened in Hainaut. Then the Estates were dissolved, while the sovereign declared it should be treated as "conquered territory." In March he requested the Brabant Estates to modify the "incomprehensible constitution." On refusal the emperor in June abrogated the *Joyeuse Entrée* and all other privileges and dissolved council and Estates, while both in Brabant and Hainaut some eminent clergymen and laymen were imprisoned. General indignation arose in the whole country; everywhere there was a spirit of opposition; hundreds left the land of their birth, where they no longer felt safe under the imperial despotism. The prohibition of emigration on September 30th came too late. The exiles soon called in the help of England, Prussia, and the republic. Van der Noot, taking to flight in April, 1789, applied personally to Van de Spiegel in May for support, suggesting that Belgium might declare itself independent and under its own stadtholder, for example the second son of William V., might unite with the republic, perhaps as one state. Van de Spiegel referred him to Hertzberg and Pitt. Soon Van der Noot appeared at Berlin as the "plenipotentiary agent of the Brabant people" and representative of the emigrants. There he found more encouragement than in London, where Pitt showed slight confidence in the Belgian insurrection.

Meanwhile affairs became more serious in Belgium. In Liege, where the population was at variance with the prince-bishop Van Hoensbroeck and was filled with

the democratic ideas of France, there was a revolution in August, a month after the fall of the Bastille. The prince-bishop left the diocese and appealed, as a prince of the empire, to the imperial chamber at Wetzlar, which commissioned the king of Prussia, as a member of the Westphalian circle, to maintain the legal authority. So Prussian troops moved into the bishopric and occupied the chief fortresses. The malcontents in the Austrian provinces again began to agitate. The Brussels advocate François Vonck, head of an organisation of reformers under the motto *Pro aris et focis*, migrated with some of his partisans to Liege territory and finally united with the emigrants at Breda. Thus Breda became the centre of an emigration hostile to the imperial government, the Prussians promising support against any attack by France or Austria. In October the emigrants under the former Austrian colonel Van der Mersch prepared for an invasion into Belgium. A manifesto of "the Brabantine people" on October 24, 1789, declared the emperor deposed from the sovereignty of Brabant, and two days later Van der Mersch with some hundreds moved to Turnhout, where he drove back the Austrian troops on the 27th, but before a superior force had to take refuge in Dutch territory. Another band commanded by the young prince of Ligne was more successful and took possession of Ghent. This success was soon followed by a general insurrection against the Austrian authority in the chief cities of the country, and the governor saw himself compelled to quit Brussels and to retire to Luxemburg, whither had to come also Trauttmannsdorff, who made in vain all possible concessions, repealed reforms, and proclaimed a general amnesty. On December 17th Van der Noot and Vonck with their partisans triumphantly entered the capital; the citadel of Antwerp, the last fortress with an Austrian garrison, surrendered at the end of January. It soon appeared



that the two parties among the insurgents, the Statists, who wanted complete reaction, and the Progressists or Vonckists, who desired reform of antiquated institutions by legal methods, could not work together. Here also conservatives and reformers, aristocrats and democrats stood in sharp opposition to each other, and many of the latter, in imitation of France, demanded the calling of a national assembly and were not averse to a union with France. Before the end of the year the provincial Estates, in which the conservatives were predominant, took the administration into their hands. Gathering in January, 1790, at Brussels as the States-General, they established a federative republic under the name of the "United States of Belgium," bound together by the union of Brussels on the 11th, maintaining the old forms of government and privileges and introducing a permanent sovereign congress as the executive power in the name of the States-General. The leaders of this congress were Van der Noot as minister of state and Van Eupen as state secretary. The Vonckists were disappointed at this course of affairs, by which the antiquated system of government was fixed for good. They showed a readiness to work for an extension of the French frontiers over all Belgium, and, when busy France declined, to make friends with Luxemburg, the matter being settled by the sudden death of the emperor Joseph (February 21, 1790) and the conciliatory disposition of his brother and successor, Leopold II.

The three allied powers deliberated on their attitude towards the new republic, whose leaders had immediately asked their help. Prussia, anxious to weaken Austria, inclined to give that help, but England was unwilling, and the republic of the United Netherlands desired the greatest possible caution, preferring the restoration of the Austrian power on "limited conditions." Van de Spiegel would not listen to the plans for uniting the

two republics into one state; he could be won over to amity between them, as could the princess, still filled with the idea of putting her second son at the head of Belgium. In a convention at Berlin (January 9, 1790) it was resolved that the three powers should not meddle with Belgian affairs, unless the emperor requested their help, or unless "forced by the urgency of circumstances." Two days later the new Belgian republic was constituted, but the maritime powers were able to persuade Prussia to remain neutral despite the pressure of the Belgians in Berlin. So the intelligent emperor Leopold could continue his negotiations with the Belgian insurgents, although Hertzberg repeatedly begged the maritime powers to recognise the independence of Belgium. Everywhere were complications, which, with war already begun against Turkey and in the north and with the pending Polish question, might lead to a general war, while the revolution in France caused uneasiness respecting possible French plans against Belgium. Danger of war threatened during the whole spring of 1790, being averted in the summer by the conference of Reichenbach, where Prussia and Austria came to an agreement regarding the east, and by the treaty of Varella in the north. With reference to Belgian matters it was determined that Leopold should proclaim an amnesty and affairs should be restored to the condition they were in at the accession of the emperor Joseph, while the three powers promised to aid in maintaining the old form of government as they had done in the republic. This agreement was the death-blow of the Belgian republic, now entirely given up by the three powers, while Austrian troops were already marching to restore the imperial authority. Immediately after his accession to the throne Leopold had sent count Cobenzl to Luxemburg to regulate matters in Belgium on the basis of a return to the old form of government. A memoir of the new sovereign disapproved of the in-



novations and violent measures adopted by his predecessor. This conciliatory document was left without answer in Brussels, but the Statists and Vonckists there were soon quarrelling, and the powerful clergy opposed the new ideas. The Statists won the victory. The three powers advised conciliation, and a conference met at The Hague, in which Lord Auckland sat for England, count Keller for Prussia, count de Mercy d'Argenteau for Austria, and Van de Spiegel for the republic, in order to settle Belgian affairs. Leopold II. led this conference as best pleased him and used it in mediating between himself and his Belgian subjects. Ever harder pressed the Belgian congress tried to escape sad necessity. In October the emperor Leopold declared he would allow until November 21st for his proposals to be accepted. When congress refused and the States-General at the eleventh hour chose his son archduke Charles as "grand duke" of Belgium, general Bender at the head of his army moved into Brabant and in a few days restored the Austrian authority. On December 2d he occupied Brussels. The government of Van der Noot and Van Eupen fled to the northern republic, and the Belgian revolution was at an end. The conference in The Hague on December 10th recognised Leopold II. as sovereign of Belgium. The governor and governess returned to Brussels in July, 1791, and count de Mercy d'Argenteau became the emperor's representative. In the autumn of 1790 the revolution in Liege also was suppressed with the restoration of old conditions. It was as if the rule of Joseph II. had never been, but in the provinces there lingered still a vague feeling of unrest, of dissatisfaction with the old institutions, of opposition to the monarchic leanings of the restored government.

In the republic internal conditions excited anxiety. Everything was to be repaired or to be made over. The events of the last years had produced the greatest con-

fusion in government and society; an end had to be put to it. The recent troubles had at least this result that even in the Orange party the eyes of many were opened to the desirability of finally adopting measures of reform. Van de Spiegel, in July, 1788, began upon a new regulation of the provincial quotas, as the republic's stand or fall depended on this matter, and the financial condition might be called extremely dangerous. The finances and the defence of the country were the chief points for serious consideration in the first years of the "restoration." The regulation of the financial quotas, finally accepted on September 7, 1792, was to last for twenty-five years. Immediately after the revolution the army was strengthened by the engagement of German troops, more trustworthy than those of France. Over and above the money paid to the troops, the German princes received an annual subsidy. The States-General would do nothing more for the army on account of the lack of money. The prince and his friends counted upon the allies in case of war. The consequences were soon to be experienced of the neglect of military interests. Naval matters did not go well at first, though here at least could be shown a slow improvement under the intelligent guidance of such men as Zoutman and Van Kinsbergen. During the English war forty large ships were put on the stocks or finished, and from 1777 to 1789 Holland paid over forty-four million guilders for the building of ships, so that the navy in the latter year numbered more than one hundred vessels of all sorts. But after 1790 the zeal slackened. It was thought that, now friendship with England was restored, a strong navy seemed less necessary—the old excuse that had caused so much misery. There was more talk than ever about the colonies. The war with England had brought the affairs both of the East India and of the West India Company into extreme confusion. The former's offices



in Hither India were taken possession of by the English with all the goods in their warehouses, causing a loss of eleven millions. Many of its ships fell into the enemy's hands, so that in 1783 it had to declare it had lost ten millions on this account alone. In February, 1781, it had announced a suspension of payment, as with debts of twenty-six million guilders it had not a cent in the treasury. Its shares dropped from 328 to 215 per cent. The East India Company was on the verge of failure. But it could not be allowed to fail, because upon its existence depended all commerce in the republic, and its shares were everywhere the investments of institutions and individuals. It received help from Holland, in a less measure from Zealand, and from the generality. A commission of the Estates of Holland, appointed in June, 1783, investigated its condition and on October 30th presented a report which proposed to help the company with an advance of eight millions and a guarantee for thirty-eight millions of its debts. Holland, holding the strings of the purse, acted strongly upon the company, which continually applied to this province for money. There was no doubt but that the country's sovereign ought to meddle in the company's affairs. The governor-general Alting, now in authority there, was convinced of this amid the shameful extortions, of which he, his favourites, and family were guilty. The sole aim of the company's servants seemed to be to obtain as much profit as possible during the few years that the old system would continue to live. A fleet of six ships commanded by captain Van Braam, as soon as the truce with England allowed in April, 1783, restored the company's authority on Riou and the peninsula of Malacca; a second squadron under captain Silvester in 1787 did the same on the west coast of Borneo and in the Moluccas; a third under captain Staring in 1789 appeared with success in various parts of the archipelago.

But more was necessary than a naval demonstration, and Van de Spiegel took a hand in the company's affairs. With him as with many others the conviction ripened soon, that Indian matters should be established upon a new basis, that the company should no longer be sovereign but should confine itself to commerce and leave the administration of the Indian lands to the government. The extraordinary meeting of the seventeen, called by the prince in March, 1788, was to give its opinion. The seventeen came to the conclusion that the company with cautious management was in a condition to meet its engagements, but could not longer bear the burdens of defence, and applied to the States-General for the thirty millions desired. A commission appointed by Holland and Zealand in May, 1788, reached the same result. Meanwhile the company's need increased, and it sought and found help from Holland. In 1789 it owed seventy-four, in the following year eighty-five millions. A commission of six members from Holland and Zealand, appointed in May and June, 1790, proposed a new loan of eight millions and in a second report (January, 1791) ordered economies and new taxes in India. The seventeen set to work in this direction. A commission was established (May, 1791) to consider possibilities. The idea was expressed that it would be best for the States-General or Holland and Zealand simply to buy the colonies from the company which could raise its commerce with the money received. This measure could not be carried out before the commission returned from India with its report. The condition remained the same, although every honest statesman was convinced that thorough reform could not be longer deferred.

It was the same with the West India Company. In consequence of the English war it got into serious difficulties; after taking over the colonies recaptured by the French fleet in 1784 it had immediate need of cash;



year after year it implored help. Holland especially and Zealand did what they could to support also this company. Satisfactory aid could only be expected from a thorough reform, and these affairs too required the intervention of the "chief director" and the council pensionary. The company's charter expired in 1791, and the opportunity of regulating it came. The States-General on May 27, 1791, resolved to dissolve the company with the end of the year, to take its possessions on behalf of the state, and to indemnify the stockholders for thirty per cent. of their capital with government bonds carrying three per cent. interest. A resolution of June 1, 1792, established "a council for the colonies in America and for the possessions of the state in Africa." Thus Van de Spiegel hoped to try an experiment with this company, which might later redound to the advantage of the East India Company, whose charter did not expire until 1796. Van de Spiegel's first quinquennial term as council pensionary ended, and on December 6, 1792, he relinquished his duties, though ready to take them up again, if the Estates of Holland so desired. There was no doubt about this, and in the most honourable terms the opinion of the Estates was made known to him. The pressure of the prince and the most eminent regents persuaded him to let himself be again elected, and with courage he girded himself for the continuation of his task. The methodical reformation of state and society upon the old foundations, of which Van de Spiegel had dreamed, was prevented by the fatal course of the war with France. When he gave up his place, he could rightly testify that he had done all in his power to restore what could be restored. What in this respect had occurred in the republic was more his work than that of the prince, who was led by him.



## CHAPTER XV

### FALL OF THE REPUBLIC

THE meeting of the emperor Leopold and king Frederick William of Prussia at Pillnitz (August 25, 1791) was to discuss their attitude towards the growing dangers, with which the French revolution menaced France and all Europe. Russia and Sweden urged intervention in France, and the representative of the emigrating French noblemen, the king's brother, the count d'Artois, solicited a violent restoration by the powers of the old conditions in the country, whose king in the summer had vainly endeavoured by flight to escape from the compulsion laid upon him. The two monarchs refused Artois, but they declared the affair of the French king a common European interest, for which with other powers they would be willing to take up arms in case of necessity. The attitude of the two powers, disapproved of by England, caused Van de Spiegel to warn that French patriotism might be awakened, all parties in France might unite against the country's enemy, and the revolution now confined to France might break out over all Europe. While the Legislative Assembly met in Paris on October 1, 1791, and the constitutional monarchy lost ground before the republican ideas of Jacobins and Girondists, Louis XVI. secretly incited the two powers to intervene by force of arms, as did also the numerous emigrants sojourning in Germany and elsewhere, against whom the Assembly not unjustly issued a decree as "suspected of conspiring against the father-



land." Louis XVI. and the emigrants believed that the armed intervention of Prussia and Austria was the only way of restoring order in France and averting the dreaded general revolution. Leopold died on March 1, 1792, and his young son Francis II. was less cautious and allowed himself to be led by warlike ministers. Again was it proved that it is less the monarchs than the ministers who make war. The war party among the revolutionists, the Girondists, won a victory over their opponents, and Dumouriez, now minister of foreign affairs, believed that Austria must be anticipated by an attack upon Belgium. On April 20th followed the declaration of war against the "king of Bohemia and Hungary," desired also by king Louis himself as the only means of rescuing him. Prussia, in alliance with Austria, prepared likewise for war. The French armies in the north suffered defeats, and confusion increased in France. But the Assembly declared "the country in danger," and a great popular movement was directed against the invading foe. The insulting manifesto, with which Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick prefaced his invasion of Lorraine in July, was equal to the death sentence of the king and brought all France under arms. In consequence of the revolution of August 10th in Paris Louis XVI. was suspended as a traitor and imprisoned with his family in the Temple. The Prussian invasion began, but was stopped by Dumouriez at Valmy on September 20th, the National Convention at Paris proclaiming the republic on the very same day. The trial and condemnation of the king, who died on the scaffold January 21, 1793, proved the development of revolutionary ideas. The fall of the relatively moderate Danton with the Girondists and the coming of the Jacobin reign of terror in August, 1793, signified the utmost agitation among the partisans of the revolution.

With the deepest anxiety Dutch statesmen had watched

these events. The French republicans were burning with desire to make the nearest "brother nations," especially Belgium, happy with the blessings of "liberty" and the "rights of man." Old French claims and new ideas led here to a policy of conquest, dangerous to all Europe. Dumouriez forced the Austrians back from before Lille, which they were besieging, and defeated them (November 6th) at Jemappes in a bloody battle that put all Belgium into his hands. Enthusiasm inspired France, which wanted to free all Europe from the yoke of monarchs, declaring "all governments are our enemies, all the peoples are our friends." All Europe meant first Belgium, scarcely recovered from the effects of the Brabant revolution. A decree of the Convention of December 15, 1792, ordered the ideas of the revolution to be carried out in the conquered countries under French supervision. Commissioners of the Convention took up the work of revolutionising in Belgium, aided by the Vonckists exiled to France and by the partisans of annexation to France. The moderate Dumouriez, dreaming of the part played by Mirabeau, would have preferred a separate federative republic, but had to give way before Danton and his followers, who wished to incorporate the country with France. Late in February the incorporation took place to the displeasure of many Belgians, but without serious opposition from fear of the sans-culottes overrunning the country. It was to be expected that the territory of the Dutch republic would not long remain unassailed, the more so as the patriot exiles residing in northern France had long urged at Paris a war with the republic or support to a revolution there. The republic, following the example of England and breaking off in August diplomatic relations with France, could not count upon the favour of the new French rulers. The fate of the exiles had not been an enviable one. First they had sought refuge in Antwerp, Brussels, and elsewhere in



Belgium. Events there had driven them to France. St. Omer was the place where they at first settled. To care for their interests Van Beyma was made by the French government "general commissioner of the Dutch refugees," and, with Valckenaer as his secretary, he distributed the slender weekly allowances to all who could show a "certificate of patriotism." The French government, after taking all the officers among them into the French army and navy, resolved to bring the rest of the exiles—about 2500—into a colony on the coast and to let them shift for themselves. Valckenaer headed the advocates, Van Beyma the opponents of a colony, and Valckenaerists and Beymanists were soon in sharp antagonism. From the colony fixed at Gravelines little good came, and the exiles dispersed, living as best they could. The French revolution gave an opportunity to many of them first in St. Omer, later in Paris. The events of 1792 encouraged them for the future, and Daendels now tried to form a Batavian legion, which as a "free foreign legion" was organised in August, 1792, under command of colonel Mascheck with Daendels as lieutenant-colonel, for the express purpose of bringing about a revolution in the republic. Mascheck received orders to allow no hostilities against the republic to the vexation of Daendels and his friends, who assured that an invasion would immediately produce a revolution. This was saying too much, but there was no doubt that the ideas of the patriots in the republic had not disappeared. Van de Spiegel knew this and kept an eye upon the exiles in Paris and elsewhere as well as upon the suspected elements within the country. The opposition he complained of proceeded not least from the secret friends of the party vanquished in 1787, which spoke out in print. Mirabeau's essay, *To the Batavians on the stadtholderate* (1788), was composed partly from data furnished by patriots and passed from hand to

hand in original and translation. By hundreds pamphlets were smuggled over the frontiers, when men dared not print them in the country. Reading societies and clubs afforded secretly an occasion for meetings of malcontents and for the diffusion of revolutionary reading matter. The moderate way, in which the government of city and country treated known patriots, was a thorn in the eye of many an Orange partisan. The excesses of the French revolution held back the well to do and the great multitude from vigorous action against the existing government, and at the end of 1792 Van de Spiegel<sup>1</sup> wrote that there was an uneasy minority, who wanted a revolution, but that the republic on the whole might be called "quite tranquil," as the intelligent patriots, like all who had anything to lose, were afraid of the French principles and preferred the present form of government. He did not dissemble that an attack from without might cause a revolt from within, so that the garrisons in the cities could not be spared.

If Dumouriez had ventured this attack immediately after the victory of Jemappes, Van de Spiegel acknowledges that possibly the enemy without a blow might have penetrated to the heart of Holland. By a declaration of war the republic would have come "into the greatest inconvenience." The exiles did their best to persuade Dumouriez to an attack. It was deferred, but might be expected in the spring, if not averted by negotiation and by recognition of the French republic. Dumouriez had already fixed his headquarters in Antwerp. The government of the Dutch republic, not ready for war and anxious to keep peace, was inclined to such a negotiation and recognition and submitted on November 16th to the opening of the Scheldt by decree of the Convention. The allies, England and Prussia, acted in

<sup>1</sup> Van de Spiegel, *Brieven en Negotiatiën*, iii., p. 39. See Jorissen, *De Patriotten te Amsterdam in 1794*, p. 40.



anything but a vigorous manner. Fortunately the French ambassador at The Hague, de Maulde, who had not yet officially taken leave, agreed with Dumouriez that France ought not to molest the republic, provided the maritime powers really wished to remain neutral and would promote a general peace at a congress. His goodwill was maintained by ample gifts of money for the payment of his debts. The sudden declaration of war of February 1, 1793, by the National Convention against "the king of England" and the "stadtholder of the republic," put an end to all wavering. England's sharp attitude towards the revolution after the death of Louis XVI. had embittered the Convention too much for it to keep peace any longer, and a war with England was also one with the republic. But the enthusiasm of the French nation and the belief in its calling to free Europe from the yoke of monarchs did not allow it to hesitate in taking up arms against almost all Europe. Dumouriez, stopped in his plan for restoring the monarchy, was forced to attack the republic against his will. The attack was directed against the Brabant fortresses in order after their conquest to penetrate into Holland with the help of the exiles. This movement of the main army under Dumouriez after the blockade of Maestricht was to be supported by another under general Miranda, who was to invade Utrecht with twenty-five thousand men. Together Dumouriez and Miranda were then to compel Amsterdam to surrender. On February 16th Dumouriez moved across the frontiers with 14,000 young and undisciplined troops and 40 cannon, and his weak vanguard of scarcely 1000 men laid siege to Breda, which, with a garrison of 1600 men, abundant stores, and 360 pieces, under command of count van Bylandt, held out only a few days and cowardly capitulated on the 24th after a short bombardment. Captain von Kropff behaved better in De Klundert; with a force of eighty men he gave way

only before an assault and fell fighting valiantly on the retreat to Willemstad. The badly defended Geertruidenberg had to surrender on March 4th. But Willemstad, soon cannonaded to ruins, under the brave Karel van Boetselaer opposed the enemy, and the blockaded fortresses of Steenberg and Bergen op Zoom also offered resistance. Daendels with eight hundred men hastened ahead to reach the island of Dordrecht across the Moerdijk, but the admirable measures, adopted by Van Kinsbergen and the able general Dumoulin for the defence of the rivers, thwarted this project. Soon there were more than a hundred vessels guarding the streams. Maestricht, bombarded by Miranda, held out, and Venloo was occupied by the Prussians under the duke of Brunswick-Oels, so that the French could go no farther on that side. The defeat of the French troops by the Austrians under command of prince Josias of Saxe-Coburg at Aldehoven in Jülich (March 1st) delivered Maestricht from the enemy. This victory and the advance of the Austrians into Belgium made Dumouriez leave his "camp of beavers" on the Moerdijk in order to drive the enemy over the Meuse. But the battle of Neerwinden (March 18th) disappointed all his hopes; beaten again at Diest and Louvain, he fell back to the Scheldt, once more taking Antwerp for his headquarters. A few days longer the two fortresses of North Brabant were occupied, but on April 2d and 3d they were evacuated by the enemy. Van de Spiegel could testify that the critical days had passed. Great was the disappointment of the exiles, as there had been no sign of any movement within the country. They were still more vexed, when Dumouriez on March 12th sent a letter to the Convention, requesting that an end be put to criminal revolutionary violence. The defeated general was refused by the Convention, and now seeing no help, no longer sure of his army, he negotiated with Coburg, proposing together to take posses-



sion of Belgium and thus to give himself an opportunity to march upon Paris and to restore the monarchy in favour of the young Louis XVII. Dismissed by the Convention and only followed by a few hundred of his soldiers, he sought safety on April 5th at Tournay in flight to the enemy's camp, after he had caused Belgium to be evacuated.

If the Convention was thus saved, France seemed lost, and the allies at Antwerp deliberated on the distribution of its colonies and border provinces. The prince and his two sons, who had distinguished themselves in the defence of the rivers, the dukes of York and Brunswick, the prince of Coburg, Lord Auckland, count Metternich as the ambassador of Austria participated; Van de Spiegel could not be present on account of his poor health. Now it appeared that the coalition was to become a fact. The republic also, though not formally allied, was to take part. England, guided by Pitt, was to be the centre of the gigantic coalition, including Russia, Sardinia, Spain, Portugal, and Naples. Coburg was to be the Marlborough of Europe's new conflict against the supremacy of France. Great plans were now to be carried out. In April twenty-two thousand Dutch troops, under command of the princes William and Frederick of Orange, went to French Flanders to assist in the military operations of the coalition armies under Coburg and York. But these troops were not in good condition. Soon it appeared that much was lacking to coöperation between the allied powers, and that the republic could get only relatively slight results from the costly war. So Van de Spiegel was of the opinion, that the republic should not become too much involved in the great plans of the powers, and should rather work for the restoration of peace. Meanwhile the war was continued in French Flanders. Condé and Valenciennes fell after a long siege. The methodical, slow, and cautious Coburg was

not the man to lead the allies against the French army, reorganised by the talented Carnot, which, carried up to an enthusiastic multitude of 650,000 men by the levy *en masse* at the end of 1793, under new generals and with the new tactics of attacks in force, soon had the upper hand. There was no more talk of a march of the allies upon Paris; a part of their army went to besiege Cambrai and Quesnoy, another part Dunkirk. The French general Houchard forced the Hessians back at Hondshoote and afterwards (September 13th) at Meenen, Halluin, and Werwick put to flight the much weaker Dutch troops under the two princes. The young prince Frederick was seriously wounded, while the hereditary prince in the retreat saved his troops with difficulty from complete destruction. On hearing these Job's tidings William V. hastened to the Dutch troops. A general retreat to Hainaut was resolved upon, and the Dutch commanders deemed it best further to expose the troops of the republic no more than was absolutely necessary. The Austrians fell back to Hainaut, complaining of the attitude of the Dutch and of the bad management of the hereditary prince, who was also severely criticised in England, and the republic faced the possibility of a new French attack upon its territory. Prussia, threatening to conclude peace with France, gave little hope for 1794, although England took all pains to keep it in the coalition. In the winter Van de Spiegel did his best to bring the three powers into agreement and to hold them allied with the republic; if possible in a quadruple alliance, which might lead to better coöperation in military matters.

The threatening danger put all thought of reform measures into the background. First the necessary money must be provided, difficult though it was to be obtained. The powers and the republic itself seemed to possess a very poor credit on the Amsterdam Bourse, so



afraid were people of the success of French arms. New engagements taken by the republic in a treaty with England (April 19th) for hiring sixty-two thousand Prussian troops made the affair no easier. Austria showed itself ready only for another campaign in the Austrian Netherlands, general Mack planning it in conjunction with York, Coburg, and the hereditary prince. The republic did what it could, and in April its general besieged Landrecies, and conquered it. The French had time to guard the road to Paris and in May defeated the Austrians at Courtrai and the English at Tourcoing. The capture of Charleroi by the hereditary prince (June 3d) brought little change in the situation. Pichegru, now at the head of the French northern army, pushed into Flanders again, while the Sambre army under Jourdan drove back the Austrians and defeated them on June 26th at Fleurus. Coburg drew back over the Meuse, and Charleroi was given up; news came from Berlin that the Prussian troops would not appear. York and the hereditary prince were too weak to oppose alone the French armies and after a severe engagement at Waterloo (July 6th) returned within the borders of the republic in Brabant, the Dutch troops reduced to less than sixteen thousand, the English to twenty thousand men. These borders were by no means well secured. Something was done to prepare the inundation in Dutch Flanders, and prince Frederick endeavoured to arm and man the fortresses, but general Moreau, commanding a French division of twenty thousand men, sent his subordinate officers with superior force, drove the Dutch troops from Cadzand, and laid siege to Sluis, which fell into the enemy's hands after a brave resistance of three weeks under general Van der Duyn on August 25th. Soon Dutch Flanders was entirely given up. In Brabant the English and Dutch forces fell back towards the Meuse, the latter being distributed among the fortresses. In July the

prince had roused the States-General in manly language to vigorous resistance, to opposition also to domestic foes, who had risen up again. At Amsterdam, where in January Irhoven van Dam had replied to a letter from Daendels, now a major-general in the French army, that a revolution was inconceivable, some patriots, including the physician Krayenhoff and the merchants Gogel and Goldberg, had given information to the impatient general. On the approach of the French armies they called for a meeting of their partisans in the Haarlem wood, which resolved to open communication with the French. The fall of Robespierre's reign of terror (July 26th) inspired the hope that revolutionary ideas might be quietly developed. Pichegru, who knew how little Paris esteemed the patriots of Holland, hesitated to comply with their request to invade Holland without express permission of the French government, which permission Daendels was to seek in Paris. On September 1st the general came back with the consent, but Pichegru, now apparently having obtained a free hand, moved only slowly forwards in the direction of Breda and Bois-le-Duc, while York fell back at Grave behind the Meuse. The Dutch army, distributed over the fortresses of Brabant and Holland, could not oppose the enemy.

The situation in September was thus about the same as in March, 1793, only there was less certainty of domestic tranquillity. Neither from Prussia, nor from Austria, nor from England was help to be expected this time for the Orange party. But the patriots did not desire to see the republic treated as a conquered country, as had happened to the Austrian Netherlands. They wanted to be allies, not subjects of the great French nation. September 15th was the day fixed for the French to invade Holland and Utrecht and for revolutions to occur in the cities. The Amsterdam committee placed men on the rivers to warn the conspirators, some twenty-five hun-



dred in number. The general dissatisfaction with the government, the fear of the French troops, and the growing love of the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity were relied upon to produce an outburst everywhere. Pichegru, having to let nearly half of his army support the movements of Jourdan in Liege, showed little desire to adopt the far-reaching ideas of the revolutionists. He confined himself at first to blocking, besieging, and bombarding the Brabant and Meuse fortresses. Crèvecoeur fell September 27th, Bois-le-Duc October 9th. Maestricht had to surrender on November 3d after a valiant defence by landgrave Frederick of Hesse; Venloo on October 26th. Pichegru kept his eyes on the English, stationed near Nimwegen and Arnhem under the incapable York. He refused to listen to Daendels and the revolutionary partisans, who had again prepared a revolution for the middle of October. St. Andries was occupied by the French, but it soon had to be given up. The patriot plans seemed to fail. The Amsterdam government discovered the arms concealed there and began to prosecute the guilty conspirators. Following his own plan, Pichegru finally crossed the Meuse at Wijchen and laid siege to Nimwegen, which capitulated on November 7th after a heavy bombardment. The republic's situation became critical by the fall of Nimwegen, and Friesland's resolution to urge negotiation in the States-General seemed to find more favour with the other provinces. The States-General and the stadtholder government judged that the republic "was not yet brought so low as to bend in a cowardly manner under the enemy's yoke," and hoped for more vigorous help from the allies. The hope of the patriots revived, and they were never weary of urging Pichegru to invade the Bommelerwaard, which would be the signal for a revolution in Holland. Neither Pichegru nor the French representatives in his camp were inclined to this step. The representative

Lacombe, married to a Dutch woman, sought to conclude peace and in conjunction with Daendels sent the receiver of Bois-le-Duc, Van Breugel, to The Hague (October 31st) to open a negotiation with the government of the republic.<sup>1</sup> Thinking that negotiations might be begun over a general peace, Van de Spiegel sent Ocker Repelaer to the French headquarters. A last attempt was made to persuade England and Prussia to greater energy, and when it failed, the States-General resolved towards the middle of December to negotiate with the enemy. Repelaer and Brantsen, appointed on December 16th to go to Paris, accepted the commission. They stopped for a time at Bois-le-Duc in the hope of obtaining from French headquarters a formal truce during the negotiation. Failing in this, the ambassadors on December 30th went on their way to Paris, where they arrived on January 6th.

Meanwhile much had changed. Since the fall of Nijmegen the enemy had only besieged Grave, which held out bravely for a month under general De Bons and on December 30th had to capitulate. The negotiations begun filled the patriots with fear, lest nothing should come of the desired revolution and the republic might withdraw from the conflict with sacrifices of money or territory. The Amsterdam committee resolved to form a revolutionary corps under command of the Dutch officers in the French army and under the supervision of a "national committee," which might figure as the beginning of a national representation. Van Dam, the former Leyden pensionary Jacob Blauw, the former Utrecht professor Van Hamelsveld, the Rotterdam broker De Fremery, the Dordrecht painter Webbers, and the Leyden student Jan ten Brink were appointed members of that

<sup>1</sup> Van Breugel, *Mémoires sur ce qui s' est passé de remarquable après la capitulation de Bois-le-Duc (La Haye et Amsterdam, 1821)*.



committee and met at Bois-le-Duc, the French headquarters. Finding little favour there, they sent on December 21st Blauw and Van Dam to Paris to oppose negotiations with the republic's government and to persuade the *Comité du salut public* to support the plans of the revolutionists. The representatives of the Convention urged the French generals to move against Holland. Moreau, temporarily in command of the northern army, gave his consent reluctantly. On December 10th operations began at different points, but the Dutch troops repulsed an attack upon St. Andries, and Daendels failed in an assault on Crèvecœur, December 11th. Daendels repeated his solicitations to Pichegru who had returned. It began to freeze, and the Dutch commanders dreaded a renewal of hostilities. Everything seemed quiet during the Christmas days, but on the 27th the enemy suddenly made an attack on all the lines from Bergen op Zoom to St. Andries, and seized Zevenbergen and other posts, while Daendels this time succeeded in crossing the frozen Meuse and in driving back the surprised Dutch troops to the Waal. Bommel fell into his hands on the following morning. Great was the terror awakened by the report of this course of affairs. The prince again called upon the States-General to rescue the fatherland, but the Dutch troops, scarcely four thousand men and too weak to oppose the enemy, retreated to Gorkum and Leerdam. York and his Englishmen drew back over the Rhine. Pichegru refused Daendel's request to let him attack Holland. He had a poor idea of the patriots, as did the government at Paris. Blauw and Van Dam had noted this in the manner of their treatment by the Paris government, while Repelaer and Brantsen were received with all honour. So Pichegru commissioned the Dutch general to capture Heusden, which was accomplished on January 13th. Once more the republic's government tried to induce the English troops to coöperate with the

Austrians. On January 6th a conference was held at Utrecht, where the two young princes deliberated with the English and Austrian commanders. But what could be done with the small and disordered Dutch force and the eleven thousand scarcely better organised English-Hessian-Hanoverian troops? A last attempt to push the enemy back from the Waal failed, and the French were already approaching Werkendam and Gorkum. On the 14th the English-Hessian-Hanoverian commanders gave notice that they could furnish no troops for the defence of Holland and for their own safety would immediately draw back to the Yssel. This decided the fate of Holland.

Signs of dissolution appeared plainly. The Estates of Utrecht reported on the 13th, that they would negotiate for the surrender of their province, and advised the States-General either to ask a suspension of hostilities or to capitulate for all the provinces. The States-General resolved upon the former and sent a verbal message to Pichegru. On the 15th Utrecht surrendered by means of a deputation to the French general Salme. In Holland itself there was a complete lack of government. On the enemy's approach the troops evacuated post after post without resistance. Gorkum, Loevestein, and Woudrichem surrendered on the 19th. Everywhere the clubs became active, and not least so in Amsterdam. On January 9th representatives of the Holland clubs held a meeting in Rotterdam, but it was evident that they dared not yet begin a revolution. The farther the French advanced, the higher rose men's spirits, and the Amsterdam committee again made ready for an insurrection, which was appointed for the 19th. But it was not to be necessary. The prince had often considered what was to become of him and his. The English ambassador's offer to help the stadtholder's family cross over to England impressed him. Already he had hired twenty-one Schev-



enings pinks for the voyage, whenever it should be necessary. On January 13th the danger seemed so near, that measures were taken to receive the family in England. All sorts of rumours made the rounds. The ardent young prince Frederick thought of aiding to defend the last ditch and of dying there like so many of his ancestors. But his father would not hear to this. On the 17th a gloomy session of the Estates of Holland was held at The Hague. Asked what could be done, the prince replied "that according to human lights there was not much prospect" of defending the province any longer. Silently the members separated. Some of them, remaining behind with the council pensionary, resolved to do what was possible to conclude a truce or to admit the enemy into the province in hopes that he would respect the existing government. A deputation of the Estates was to try to obtain this. The States-General also resolved to send such a deputation.

Meanwhile the report spread that the prince was to depart. Van de Spiegel refused to believe it and sent him a letter, in which he adjured him to think of "what he owed to himself, his house, and the fatherland"; "the departure of Your Serene Highness is the signal of a general confusion, the consequences of which are not to be foreseen; it is an abandonment of all that honour and duty command to preserve until the last moment." It was too late. All arrangements had been made for the princess and the hereditary princess with her young son, the later William II., to leave. Before noon the court carriages had conveyed them to the pinks, which started out amid the tolling of the Scheveningen church bell. At noon of the 17th the prince called to an audience some members of the States-General, his household, and the foreign ambassadors. In their presence and with his two sons beside him the prince declared that he was determined to go away, as it was

reported to him that the French government would not negotiate so long as he was in the country. In reading the short address his voice gave way; he let a chamberlain finish it, and left the room to go to the carriages waiting to bring him and his sons to the pinks. The prince's flag at half-mast on the towers, many houses closed, some of the gentry dressed in mourning, a silent and shocked crowd on the snowy streets—such was the picture presented by the departure of the Oranges from the fatherland. The pinks remained at anchor several hours, and the prince was enabled to receive the communication from the ambassadors in Paris assuring him that the French government would only negotiate, when the stadtholder family had quitted the country. Towards midnight the prince put to sea to cross over to England. It was all over with the old republic.

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## CHAPTER XVI

### ORGANISATION OF THE BATAVIAN REPUBLIC

WITH the departure of the stadtholder in the evening of January 18, 1795, the old republic ceased to exist in the form, in which it had prolonged its life during the last half century. The moderate spirit, which now prevailed in France after the fall of Robespierre, inspired the men also, who, with the French representatives, took affairs in the republic into their hands and among whom assumed prominence Pieter Paulus, living at Rotterdam without office, and the Amsterdam advocate Rutger Jan Schimmelpenninck. In all the provinces the proclamation of the French representatives became the basis of the new conditions. Everywhere the change of government could now begin. The Amsterdam committee took the lead. From Amsterdam and The Hague the watchword, maintenance of peace and replacement of Orange regents by patriots, went from city to city. So the changes for a time were limited to the appearance of patriotic members of the government in place of Orange partisans and to alteration of the names of municipal and provincial governing boards, while the States-General, composed of new persons, continued to bear their old name. This change of citizen bodies into communes, of town councils into municipalities, of Estates into assemblies of provisional representatives, of colleges into committees, under the motto "liberty, equality, and fraternity," took place under the auspices

of the patriotic clubs, the former reading societies, now called revolutionary committees. The festive dances around the liberty tree painted in the national colours, red, white, and blue, and with the liberty cap, the passionate speeches, the meetings of citizens mostly in the churches, the illuminations and displays of flags, the shouts in honour of the revolution were everywhere of the same character. The Amsterdam revolutionary committee, which had declared itself the committee of insurrection in the Netherlands, managed everything by sending delegates. It also indicated the persons, who on January 26th took possession of the hall of the Estates of Holland and chose Pieter Paulus president.

This new body replaced the commissioners by a committee of general welfare, the chamber of accounts by a committee of accounts, established a military committee and one of finances, abolished the office of council pensionary and transferred his functions to the president, annihilated the nobility of Holland, and had the country represented by deputies. It declared for a national gathering of representatives of the whole people to settle upon a definitive form of government. The first year of Batavian liberty had dawned, and the three magical words—"liberty, equality, and fraternity," were to make their influence felt. In February the other provinces followed Holland's example. On the 27th the admiralty boards were replaced by a committee of naval affairs, consisting of twenty-one members from the whole republic; the council of state on March 4th changed its name to committee of the general affairs of the confederacy on land. The stadtholdership was abolished by the States-General on February 23d, William V. being deposed. The former council pensionary and the hated Bentinck van Rhoon, considered as the heads of the old government, were arrested on February 4th. The great question was how a definitive end should be put to the



war with France in fact really finished. Everything made a speedy arrangement with France very desirable. This was understood by the French representatives in the country and by the committee of public safety, which conducted the government at Paris; but the main question for them was, how France could draw the most profit from Pichegru's "brilliant conquest." The country, still rich in capital, with an army of fifty thousand men and a navy that might be of great value to France, must be firmly bound to the conqueror. The independence of the republic could only be conditional and temporary, as a sort of purgatory preceding the paradise of incorporation. The ambassadors Blauw and Meyer, formerly scorned at Paris, received on February 20th an official appointment as ministers plenipotentiary. But the committee of public safety showed no inclination to recognise them or the States-General. It wanted to know first how affairs really were in the republic and what it could demand. It sent two experienced representatives—Cochon and Ramel, who appeared moderate and approved the measures of their colleagues in the conquered country. The sending of Richard as an extraordinary representative was to make French and Batavians gain equally by their revolution. There was a misunderstanding, for the Batavians imagined that the French had simply helped them as disinterested friends to do away with the old government, and this had not been the intention. Soon came to Paris reports on the standing of the republic. The public treasuries were as good as empty; the finances were in great confusion in consequence of the war. The population, estimated at two and a half million souls, might still be regarded as the richest in Europe, as rich as the French nation five times greater; its wealth consisted chiefly of money and personal property. The money invested was calculated to amount to fifteen hundred million livres, lent on in-

terest to the powers now waging war against France; this interest amounted to fifty million livres, but now remained unpaid, and was in danger of disappearing with the capital, if the war continued. Reliance might be placed on the merchandise, valued at one thousand million livres, but it had been seen to leave the country for Hamburg and elsewhere from fear of confiscation by the approaching French. The reporters believed that the advantage of the conquest for France was to be sought in the circumstance that the republic was of great strategic importance by reason of its situation between England and its allies on the continent. Cochon and Ramel thought that kindness must be used and the population be won over to France. So they proposed to impose upon the republic the maintenance of at most forty thousand French troops. A close offensive and defensive alliance between the two republics, as two independent states, would be in the interest of both. A war contribution of eighty to ninety millions and a loan of one hundred millions might be stipulated.

Early in March a basis of negotiation was laid by Merlin de Douai, Rewbell, and Siéyès. Meanwhile the victorious patriots began to manifest a certain uneasiness, not only concerning the disposition of the population, but also with regard to French views and plans. They feared being delivered up again to Prussia and England, if the fate of war so decided, or being obliged to give up complete independence. Negotiations between Blauw and Meyer and the committee at Paris went on with excessive slowness in March and April. They and Valckenaer, working with them in Paris, were not frightened by the lofty tone of the committee. They knew that the French government was in an extremely difficult situation, so that a new revolution might be feared at any moment. At The Hague, however, where the government was anything but sure of its future, the opinion



was quite otherwise, and the reports of the French representatives induced the Paris committee not to cease its efforts by threats to make the Dutch government yield. Pichegru at the end of March was replaced by Moreau, and the latter did not consider himself bound by the promises of his predecessor concerning the relation of the French to the Batavians. Blauw, who was not edified by the attitude of the men at The Hague, came on April 11th with Valckenaer to The Hague from Paris in order to advise vigorous resistance. The attempt was made to gain as much time as possible, although Blauw had brought a threatening letter from the committee allowing only ten days for a decision on an offered ultimatum. On April 24th Blauw was again in Paris and did not hasten to deliver the too yielding answer. The committee, informed about this answer from The Hague, forced a meeting upon the ambassador. New negotiations followed on these "preliminaries," but it soon appeared that Blauw and Meyer had not sufficient powers to conclude a peace. So the committee resolved to send its members Rewbell and Siéyès to The Hague with full powers. They departed on May 4th and reached their destination four days later—a "bear," whose "paws," and a "fox," whose "wiles" were to be dreaded, wrote a Batavian agent to Pieter Paulus. The two ambassadors began by a military demonstration with Moreau's troops in the direction of Utrecht to confirm the impression of their mission to bring matters to an end. They received a report that the States-General had equipped four of their most able members with full powers. They saw their exertions crowned with success, for the affair had an unexpectedly rapid course. On May 11th negotiations began on Flushing and Dutch Flanders, and five days later an agreement was reached. The Hague gentlemen, acting under fear of the movements of the French troops, were sooner ready to give

way than their ambassadors at Paris. The bear and the fox were successful in their purpose to the great vexation of the Batavian ambassadors, who hoped to secure better terms by making use of dissensions in the committee of public safety. Thus The Hague treaty of May 16th was brought about. It became the basis of the relation, in which the Batavian republic was to stand thenceforth towards its French sister.

The recognition of the republic of the United Netherlands—so its title still remained—"as a free and independent power" was solemnly affirmed by the sister state. The "eternal peace" between the two countries until the end of the war was to be strengthened into an offensive and defensive alliance, which was to last always against England, while neither of the two states could conclude a separate peace with England—provisions that bound the Batavian republic to the French policy against the dreaded rival. The republic received back its ships, arsenals, and artillery besides all its territory excepting as a "just indemnification for the conquest" Dutch Flanders and Maestricht and Venloo; Flushing was to obtain a French garrison, and its harbour was to be "common" to both peoples. As an indemnity France was to receive 100,000,000 guilders. The Dutch republic was not to shelter the emigrants, nor the French those of the Orange party. Within a month the French troops in the republic were to be reduced to twenty-five thousand men, which until the end of the war must be paid, clothed, and fed by it, sick or well, and after peace could remain in its service. The two republics guaranteed each other's colonial possessions in the east and west. Thus the treaty stipulated great advantages for France, but it was a question whether these advantages could be drawn from the impoverished and paralysed Batavian republic. Victoriously the two French envoys returned to Paris, proud of



their success and of obtaining the ardently desired money, of which Siéyès boastfully laid down a Dutch guilder upon the committee's table. On the other hand the disappointment of the Batavian ambassadors at Paris was great. The numerous opponents of the humiliating treaty hoped that at least its ratification might be resisted. But the States-General at The Hague frustrated this hope. On June 5th appeared before the Convention the envoys bringing the ratification, and one of them spoke of this peace as the "happy presage of an unknown felicity, when each generation of Frenchmen and Batavians, fraternising again, will present to astonished Europe the striking but enchanting picture of the hitherto fabulous golden age." The applause of the Convention accompanied these pompous words, so little in agreement with the conditions, under which the peace was really accepted by the republic of the United Netherlands, from fear of annexation to France or of the return of the stadtholder with the help of Prussia and England. Siéyès and Rewbell had made a clever use of this fear.

Relations with England naturally became hostile. Envoys sent to England could not prevent the constant capture and detention of merchantmen. The dangers threatening Hanover, the electorate of George III. of England, deterred him from declaring war on the Batavian republic, although he did not recognise it. Prussia's attitude appeared suspicious on account of the English, Hanoverian, and Hessian troops still stationed there and the reports concerning a secret understanding between France and Prussia and concerning a gathering of Dutch emigrants near Bremen and Osnabrück. The stadtholder's youngest son, Prince Frederick, received from his father authority to prepare for an attack on the weak eastern frontier of the republic. The Prussian government, having just made peace with France, was unwilling to support this enterprise. Some

six hundred officers and twelve hundred men were collected. Finally the conviction forced itself upon Prince Frederick that neither Prussia nor England would help. At the end of October he gave up the project and went back disappointed to England. Meanwhile the revolution within the country was vigorously promoted by all sorts of measures in the different provinces. In Holland the old count's tolls were abolished, as well as the exemptions from taxation granted to certain persons; coats of arms in the churches, memorials of the rule of nobles and patricians, were removed in many places; the prohibition of liveries followed; the gallows and whipping-post disappeared from the highways as degrading to humanity. Attention had first to be fixed upon obtaining money for the almost empty public treasuries. Holland, followed by Overijssel and Zealand, began late in March with a forced collection of unminted gold and silver, "dead capital," which must be changed into coin the sooner the better. But this was far from being sufficient. Holland issued a five per cent. loan on June 11th, and in July a tax became necessary of six and one-fourth per cent. on all property and incomes. After fruitless trials of "voluntary negotiations" other provinces resorted to compulsory taxes, that soon had to be followed by others. These taxes and the requisitions for the French troops, whose worthless assignats had to be accepted in payment, caused great trouble. On February 2d Holland resolved to have the assignats circulate only under certain limitations. But this aroused the indignation of the French representatives, who demanded immediate repeal of the resolution. The government of Holland, as well as of the other provinces, had to yield and let the assignats circulate freely. Thus the blessings of French friendship were experienced. There was soon a less favourable opinion concerning the French troops, who were constantly exchanged for new detach-



ments, on their arrival in a neglected and miserable state, on their departure equipped, clothed, and provisioned, as was stipulated in the agreement of The Hague. These troops were not always within the frontiers. In September thirty-six thousand men had to be paid, and only seven thousand of them were within the frontiers.

After the conclusion of peace the organisation of the army was resumed. It had to be effected with caution, as many of the officers and subordinates still regarded the old captain-general as their chief. Daendels, Dumonceau, De Winter, the first a French general of division, the others brigadier-generals, received on May 25th leave, like all other Hollanders in the French service, to go over into the service of the United Netherlands. Daendels was designated as commander-in-chief. He wanted to bring up the army to twenty-four thousand men in peace, to thirty-six thousand in time of war; he urged also a general arming of the citizens. Daendels and Dumonceau succeeded in restoring order and discipline in the army and in beginning reorganisation after the French model. The naval committee under guidance of the experienced Paulus made the greatest efforts for the reorganisation of the fleet. It was resolved to abolish the admiralties and to establish five departments at Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Hoorn, Flushing, and Harlingen; the entire navy was "licentiated" on account of the Orange partisanship of its officers, a large number of the chief officers voluntarily leaving the service and others not being appointed again. This change deprived the fleet of its best abilities, while less experienced officers of lower rank were rapidly promoted, and others were advanced for their patriotic opinions. Among the sailors all nationalities were represented, and there were not a few vagabonds and undesirable seamen, who could only be so called in name. The chief personage in the navy was Jan Willem de Winter, going into exile in 1787

as a naval lieutenant and afterwards becoming a general in the French service, but now intrusted with the reorganisation of the fleet. On the appointment of the new officers (June 26th) he was made vice-admiral and then chief commander of the fleet. New regulations for the service were hastily put together. An official investigation ordered by the States-General showed that the stadtholder's government in its last years had not neglected the navy and that the fleet included twenty-four good ships of the line and twenty-four frigates. In August De Winter could sail out from Texel with some ships and send two squadrons to the Danish and Norwegian coast, of which the latter fought with an English squadron and suffered severe losses. Want of money and good seamen prevented the sailing of squadrons to the East and West Indies for the protection of the colonies. This protection was necessary, as the English had made immediate use of the order, which William V. directed to the governors in east and west on February 7th at Kew. This order of the "prince of Orange" commanded them to admit the troops of England and the English ships as those of a power "in friendship and alliance with Their High Mightinesses" and as coming to repel a French invasion. Great was the anger in the republic, when the order and its consequences became known in the summer of 1795. It was declared that William V. had had no other aim than "to deliver the colonies into the hands of the English" and therefore was guilty of high treason. The English government promised formally to give back the regions and ships taken on the restoration of peace and of the old form of government. Although it is now established that William V. and the English government acted in good faith, the high treason remained under investigation, and England went on its way, sent expeditions to the various colonies, and took possession in 1795 of the Cape of Good Hope. In April, 1796, followed Demerara,



Essequibo, and Berbice without resistance on account of the order. The governor of Ceylon, Van Angelbeek, tried to defend the island, but had to surrender in February, 1796. Malacca had gone over in August, the posts on Sumatra's western coast followed in November as well as those on the coasts of Hither India, again on account of the order. The Moluccas also fell into the hands of the English in the spring of 1796, except Ternate which held out for years under the energetic governor Budach. The two committees for East and West Indian commerce, instituted at the end of the year, did not begin their work under favourable auspices. Even in Java the weak government neglected to take the necessary measures for resisting the English.

In the meantime the new government personages in the motherland did all they could to organise the country anew, mainly in the moderate direction they had shown at the beginning of the revolution. The clubs, formed everywhere in cities and villages, urged a speedy calling together of a National Assembly to be elected by the people and to accomplish here what the French Constituent Assembly had done for the sister republic—the establishment of a government built on new foundations, of a new state to take the place of the republic of the United Netherlands. The leaders of the revolution desired an indivisible republic under the immediate sovereignty of the whole people. But they understood that this desire would encounter serious resistance. In the local clubs, societies, reading circles, parish gatherings, citizen meetings, various matters were zealously discussed. If the clubs were to exert an important influence, they must work together. The idea of a “central meeting” of delegates of the clubs seems to have been suggested by the vehement Brabant pastor Witbols, one of the warmest revolutionary partisans of those days. Provincial meetings had preceded, when from Leeuwarden

on May 30th it was proposed to hold a general meeting of the clubs at Utrecht. There a meeting took place on June 11th, and with it was connected an assembly of the same kind at The Hague; a definitive "central" meeting at The Hague came together on the 26th to the number of fifty-eight members from different provinces, and by the Dordrecht democrat Gerrit Paape a plan of organisation was offered on the basis of "liberty, equality, and the rights of the man and citizen." The purpose was to form a National Convention for the "establishment of a constitution, grounded upon the pillars of liberty and equality, the inalienable rights of the man and the citizen, and upon the unity and indivisibility of this commonwealth." The commission of the committee of general affairs, intrusted with the preparation of a general reform of the state, presented (May 29th) a regulation to the States-General for convoking a National Assembly, which should take the place of the old States-General, as a "representative body" of the whole people for drawing up a definitive constitution. The proposed regulation was discussed in the autumn, but Zealand opposed it, and Friesland appeared divided in opinion; not until November 26th did the States-General by a majority resolve to hold a National Assembly. Zealand, Friesland, and Groningen protested jointly against the resolution adopted by a majority. Both sides persisted in their opinions. At the meeting of December 30th Utrecht again had the National Assembly resolved upon by four against three votes. At the end of the year matters stood upon the same footing. But Holland was determined not to give way, and its representatives, led by Paulus, declared: "The National Convention or death!" The province was vigorously supported by the French ambassador, who from the Executive Directory established at Paris (October 30th) had received instructions to stand by, in word and deed, the moderate union-



ists in their striving for a National Convention. Finally February 18, 1796, it was unanimously resolved by the States-General to have the National Assembly meet on March 1st in the manner desired by Holland. The regulation for this meeting, a sort of preliminary constitution, was proclaimed by the States-General. It consisted of one hundred and forty-seven articles in eight chapters. In every province the population had to be divided into districts of fifteen thousand souls, with subdivisions of five hundred souls each, from which those entitled to vote were to assemble in a "primary meeting." Every citizen twenty years of age was entitled to vote, with the exception of those who had received charitable assistance more than three months in the last year and those who refused to declare that they "held only such a form of government for legitimate as is based upon the supremacy of the whole people" and considered illegal "all hereditary offices and dignities." The voters in each primary meeting chose with closed ballots and by a majority an elector and a substitute. Thirty electors chose in the same way a representative and two substitutes, who were to represent the people in the National Assembly. The Assembly was to manage the foreign relations, to possess the right of peace and war, to conclude treaties and alliances, to fix the coinage, to govern the army and navy besides the colonies, to bring about the arming of the citizens, to administer the general finances. The provincial governments retained authority over justice, finances, police, and domestic affairs. A commission of twenty-one members must within six months draw up a constitution to be examined by the Assembly and within a year to be offered to the people for their approval or disapproval. Voting in the Assembly must be by individuals, the deliberations public, the absolute majority decisive. Of the one hundred and twenty-six persons to be elected ninety were present on

March 1st in the former dancing hall of the stadtholder in the Binnenhof, now christened as the National Hotel. In the old forms the States-General sitting on the other side of the Hotel, represented by a commission of nine members, had the members of the National Assembly reviewed, led in by the chamberlain, and had them make the required declaration. Then followed the choice of a president, Pieter Paulus, who received from the chairman of the States commission the three-coloured scarf and was installed by him. Paulus thereupon "in the name of the people of the Netherlands" declared amid deep stillness that this assembly was "the representative body of the people of the Netherlands." Shouts of "Long live the republic" within the hall and without, loud clapping of hands and the blare of trumpets, the firing of muskets and cannon announced the birth of the new republic, which was to take the place of the old United Netherlands. A festive procession and allegorical performances made the holiday more brilliant. The States-General, having received the report of what had occurred, had now only to declare their meeting dissolved. With an appropriate speech their president ended the last session of the body, that for more than two centuries had represented the United Netherlands. The new state of affairs had begun.







## CHAPTER XVII

### UNIONISTS AND FEDERALISTS

THE great assembly, that was to decide the future arrangement of the new republic, was composed of the most heterogeneous elements. Many belonged to what "the nation at this time possessed most excellent in scientific knowledge, talents, and eloquence," but it counted also "very mediocre members." The majority of the assembly consisted of moderate unionists, who chose the respected and able Paulus as the first president. Schimmelpenninck, though young, had a great personal influence on the course of affairs by his eloquent speech, his clever and moderate action, his cautious tacking between the parties. Paulus, sick from the first days, could exercise slight influence. It was said of the assembly: "Never saw the Netherlands so much wisdom united under one roof." The commission for the regulation of the state was instituted on March 15th. While the commission set about its difficult work, the National Assembly held important discussions on subjects of state policy amid the affairs of the day. The deliberation, from want of experience, led repeatedly to great confusion, especially after the lamentable death of the honoured Pieter Paulus on March 17th. The able professor of law De Rhoer managed to impress his conservative stamp on the draft that had an unmistakably federalistic and anti-democratic character. The learned Simon Stijl presented the draft of the constitution to

the assembly on November 10th. Two chambers, the Great Chamber and that of the Ancients, with a council of state as the executive power, retention of the provinces renamed as departments, maintenance of the provincial quotas and financial arrangements in general, separation of church and state, sharp differentiation of the administrative, judicial, and financial powers—these were the main points of the meritorious but rather federalistic draft, which was received with slight agreement by the great majority of the assembly. The discussion over the extensive draft kept the assembly busy five months amidst the treatment of daily affairs and amidst growing uneasiness. This uneasiness arose from the disappointment of the revolutionists at the too great consideration shown their Orange and federalistic opponents and on the other side from the latter's fear of revolutionary measures constantly urged by the clubs. It was known that the unionists spared no pains to persuade the Directory at Paris to a vigorous intervention for upholding the unionist principle and that Noël, the French ambassador at The Hague, was besought by the clubs to use his influence to the same end. The French government resolved to exert its influence more secretly and to show only "the hand which protects and not that which compels." By the gentle pressure of its ambassador it led the discussions in the spring of 1797 in the desired direction of moderate unionism. There was little need of regulating the colonies now that England had nearly all of them in its hands, and the squadron sent out under the rear-admiral Lucas to recover the Cape and what was lost in India, nine ships with three hundred and forty cannon and two thousand men, had been captured by the powerful enemy without defending itself in Saldanha Bay on August 17, 1796, in consequence of the commander's incapacity and the Orange sailors' disobedience. The smaller squadron of Braak



destined for the West Indies arrived there in time to save Surinam. The way, in which the whole draft containing nine hundred and eighteen articles, now ridiculed by the democrats as the "big book,"—it was considered "finished" not by voting but merely by acclamation—was received, promised little good. The Batavian government securities falling in April, 1797, to twenty per cent. showed plainly that fear for the future was universal.

The important discussions had this advantage, that people learned to think and deliberate on questions of state policy; the press brought under the eyes of the public the "Journal of the proceedings of the National Assembly," and both in clubs and in pamphlets and weekly newspapers men became more or less familiar with the subjects discussed. An active political life prevailed especially in the revolutionary clubs and societies. They were in close relation with one another. The presidents of the clubs formed in each city a secret bureau of correspondence, which was in connection with the secret provincial bureaus, all under the lead of the very secret general bureau at Amsterdam. This secret league, including the whole country in its net of organisation, assured a powerful influence to the revolutionary elements. According to one of the resolutions adopted at The Hague, in case of rejection by the primary meetings, a new National Assembly was to meet on September 1st to draw up a new constitution. The fixing of the dates, August 1st and 2d for the elections to the new assembly and August 8th for voting on the draft of the constitution, showed that rejection was expected. This rejection, ardently desired by the partisans of the prince and the violent unionists and federalists, was expected, because the former, though excluded from the primary meetings, had indirectly enough influence in them and the last two fractions were powerful among the revolutionists. Thus a sharp conflict of parties arose during

the summer of 1797 in the Batavian republic, and the French government mixed in it by having its ambassador in an official note of July 20th express the hope that the Batavian people would not hesitate "to receive favourably a social pact that promises to it such great advantages." Nine thousand copies of the document were posted up in the country, while eight thousand were offered to the primary meetings and six thousand to trade. In the clubs and primary meetings unionist and federalistic principles were discussed most vehemently. A large number of those entitled to vote, estimated at 400,000, were frightened away or excluded by the required declarations; of the 136,716 appearing, 27,955 voted for, 108,761 against, so that the fate of the draft was decided without doubt. Sharp also was the contest in the elections of August 1st. The democratic party exerted itself to obtain the victory and to overcome the opposition of the French government. It secured the election of many of its members, though it did not obtain the majority, and though many members of the first National Assembly returned to the second. On the other hand the moderate party lost some able men.

Immediately after the opening on September 1st a violent opposition arose against the old regulation. Soon a commission for the constitution of twenty-one members was appointed. In accord with the spirit of the new assembly this commission was of a predominant democratic-unionist character. In the direction of democracy worked the new revolution at Paris, where on September 4, 1797, the democratic members of the Directory by a *coup d'état* removed the reactionary elements from this body and from the two chambers. The idea of a similar stroke was in the air of the Netherlands. The confusion and uncertainty were augmented, while waiting for the proposals of the constitutional commission, by warm discussions of the great principles of unity and indivisibility,



the consolidation of the provincial debts, the separation of church and state. Amidst discussions often tempestuous the nation was rudely alarmed by a portentous event. The reorganisation of the fleet under the committee of the navy had in 1796 increased it to a considerable force: sixty-six ships with seventeen thousand men were ready in the summer of that year. It was hoped to unite the various squadrons and then with the French fleet from Brest to undertake an expedition to Ireland. Early in March, 1797, the squadron of the Meuse was brought to Texel, and in April came proposals from the Directory for joint action in July of the French, Spanish, and Batavian fleets in order to convey a considerable army to Ireland. The Batavian fleet was to sail out in its full strength and embark fifteen thousand French troops on transports, while the Franco-Spanish fleet from Brest was to furnish fifty ships of the line and fifty thousand men. The Batavian commanders, vice-admiral De Winter and lieutenant-general Daendels, went to Paris to settle matters and remove obstacles. Finally, as the Franco-Spanish fleet seemed far from ready, it was resolved at The Hague to undertake independently an expedition to Ireland with Batavian ships and troops—a reckless project, considering the superior force of the British navy in the North Sea. With zeal the work of preparation went on, and in July the whole fleet of eighty ships, with troops embarked, lay at anchor before Texel. But De Winter during weeks and weeks was prevented from sailing out by contrary winds, despite the constant urgency of the committee, and the English fleet under Duncan lay before the Marsdiep to obstruct the sailing. Thus the favourable season passed, and in September the soldiers were disembarked. The invasion of Ireland appeared to be given up. The disappointment was great, and the government was of the opinion that the fleet, brought together with so much trouble and

expense, must go out to attack the English. The commission of foreign affairs especially urged this. In spite of De Winter's warnings, he was at last compelled to obey a positive order of the commission and sailed out on October 7th. He remained on the coast off the Meuse, exercising his ships and crews in sailing and shooting, and in expectation of the English fleet, which appeared on the 11th. De Winter, sailing northwards, encountered it at Camperdown, under command of Duncan, as he had feared considerably stronger than his own, though the number of ships, twenty-four large and small, was about equal on both sides. The English admiral, observing the Batavian fleet in irregular line of battle, pushed rapidly into that line and broke it in two places, after which the fate of the Batavians was decided. With great bravery De Winter and his men offered resistance; but one ship after another had to surrender, finally that of De Winter himself; ten ships fell into the enemy's hands. It was a severe defeat and made a deep impression. The only consolation was that the "old heroism, constancy, and perseverance" had been again displayed, which was readily recognised by the enemy. When some months later the prisoners of war returned, ovations greeted them.

This defeat inflicted a heavy blow on the prestige of the National Assembly and of the government. The commission for foreign affairs was assailed from all sides on account of the order given by it. From the deliberations on measures to be adopted it was plain that federalism was still strong, and that the unionists could only win the indivisibility of the state by a hard fight. Petitions signed by more than two hundred thousand persons for continuing the salaries of the Reformed church preachers, in opposition to the unionist demand for complete separation of church and state, caused dissension and fear for the course of affairs. The Am-



sterdam "Jacobin" club, under guidance of its correspondence bureau—The Outlook, dreading reaction and eager to see the example of Paris followed, resolved to take matters into its hands. It sent to Paris a former gin distiller of Schiedam Eykenbroek, who with the ex-officer Bode and the former page of the princess Wilhelmina, Eberstein, asked the Directory to replace Noël and Hoche by more reliable Jacobins and with the help of the radicals in the National Assembly to venture a *coup d'état*. It found support, when to various members of the covetous new government at Paris it made financial offers of no small importance—there was talk later of eight hundred thousand guilders and more, to be paid from the funds of the Batavian republic. The Jacobin party in the National Assembly hesitated to trust this doubtful aid. Not until the Amsterdam club in December threatened to take up the work, did the representatives of the people give way, at least some of them, while others, like Vreede, kept in the background. The twelve members, who under Vreede's lead had incorporated in a proposition the principle of the unity of the state in the former assembly and in the second all had seats, were now determined to listen to urgency. They entered into secret relations with some thirty other members and with the Directory at Paris, which, after the honest general Hoche, had put the intriguing Jacobin Beurnonville at the head of the French troops in Utrecht and appeared inclined to lend a hand in more vigorous measures. A joint declaration of principles of forty-three members of the assembly appeared on December 12th. As "men of honour" they affirmed themselves ready to fight for a programme laid down in nine points. This public declaration of principles of Vreede and his friends seemed a precursor of the *coup d'état*, which was generally expected after September. The replacement of the cautious Noël by Charles Delacroix, former minister

of foreign affairs and an energetic Jacobin, with whom returned to the country the intriguing Ducange as adviser and secretary, appeared to presage important events with the French government's support and in favour of the unionists. The new ambassador brought a plan for the regulation of the state with authority to use force in securing its acceptance. The moderate majority of the assembly opposed sharply the signers of the declaration. Some moderates sought to find a middle way by urging the commission of the constitution to hasten its work. The commission declared (January 15, 1798) that it would present the new draft within six weeks. In a moment of spontaneous enthusiasm the entire assembly swore, "gathered harmoniously about the altar of liberty," either "to save the fatherland," or "to die at their posts."

The time was approaching, when the signers of the December declaration, now increased to fifty, would want with Delacroix and Ducange to strike their decisive blow. The refusal of the majority to give the new French general, Joubert, command also of the Batavian army made Delacroix resolve to adopt the measure reserved for the last resort, in compliance with the wishes of the party of the most ardent unionists, the members led by Vreede and his friends. Delacroix declared that his government would not allow "a country which it has called to liberty to be any longer the prey of anarchy," and drew up with Ducange and the chief unionists a programme, in which the importance of a close connection with France was least of all forgotten. Delacroix did not consent to establish a constitution in the Batavian republic after the model of the French Directory with the help of the moderates. He joined Ducange and the ultras and obtained from his government complete liberty of action. The plan of "essential principles," agreeing in the main with the December declaration, was



signed by fifty members and sent to Paris for approval. It was desired to "close the revolution by a wise constitution and a strong government." Joubert was to lend a hand, and the commander of the Batavian troops, Daendels, declared himself ready to support this attempt to come to an end. In the East Indian house at The Hague meetings of the confederates took place, where details were discussed. The circumstance that their partisan Midderigh was chosen on the 19th as president of the assembly and consequently the command of The Hague citizen watch fell into his hands, led to the immediate execution of the *coup d'état* on the 22d. In the night of the 21st to the 22d Midderigh with Joubert and Daendels took measures to occupy the chief posts. At four o'clock in the morning the hated members of the committee for foreign affairs were arrested in their houses, and the other representatives were summoned to a meeting towards nine o'clock. Meanwhile the fifty with the president had gathered in the lodging of the city of Haarlem, whither other representatives went, so that the great majority together marched under escort of Batavian soldiers and citizen watch and amid the plaudits of the people to the hall of meeting in the Binnenhof. It found there the doors guarded and infantry and cavalry with cannon posted on the neighbouring squares. The president read a speech asserting that the fatherland was in danger and not an hour was to be lost, that he wanted now to settle the important matter and appealed to the support of the assembly, which at once by a solemn declaration attested its "unalterable aversion" to stadtholdership, federalism, aristocracy, and anarchy. Ten members refused this declaration and were sent away. Twenty others on arrival were conducted to the president's room and deprived of their membership. Not until eleven o'clock was the public session held, in which the old regulation was abolished

together with all provincial sovereignty. The assembly declared itself legal under the name of "Constituent Assembly, representing the Batavian People." Delacroix, received ceremoniously in the assembly, brought his congratulations on the "energetic measures" and in return was thanked for his coöperation. The assembly resolved to appoint an Intermediary Executive Council of five members and a new commission of seven members for the constitution, and it gave notice of what had happened to the provinces and officials. A proclamation to the people testified publicly gratitude to France, and the Directors wrote to Paris: "Our vessels, our equipages, our treasures are yours. Dispose of them." At noon everything was over, the troops returned to their barracks, and the population of The Hague recovered from the confusion brought about by these events.

The management of affairs now rested with the five members of the Intermediary Executive Council, all democrats who would hesitate at nothing to secure victory for their principles. No less than twenty-nine of the members and substitutes, who had sworn to the declaration of aversion, resigned one after another. They were immediately removed from their posts, deprived of their right to vote, and placed under watch in their dwellings. From all officials without distinction a declaration of aversion was demanded. The republic was little more than a French province. The Parisian Directors had not delayed long before making use of the invitation sent them from The Hague and on April 12th concluded a new treaty with the Batavian republic, by which the number of French troops to be maintained here was put at twenty-five thousand, with an annual subsidy of 1,200,000 guilders over and above support, clothing, equipment, and lodging, while France might dispose of three-quarters of the Batavian army. This was—besides the presents in money to Delacroix, Joubert, the



Directory, and others—the price of the proffered assistance. Before long the commission of seven was ready with its constitutional work. On March 6th it presented the draft that had been completed under the daily coöperation of Delacroix. The five hundred and twenty-seven articles were rapidly discussed and settled in the assembly. On the evening of the 17th all was over, and preparations could be made for the voting in the primary meetings. From all voters the familiar declaration was demanded with the addition that nobody could be elected, who did not favour the desired principles, and with the exclusion of all known to think otherwise for the period of ten years. Emissaries of the Executive Council exercised supervision over the carrying out of this resolution adopted March 10th, and the work was often done rudely and arbitrarily. Of the 165,520 voting this time 153,913 declared for, 11,597 against the draft, which result on May 1st was communicated by the Executive Council to the Constituent Assembly. The constitution of the Batavian republic thus enacted began with general principles laying down the rights of the man and citizen. The endeavour to suppress federalism appeared in the division of the territory into eight departments of about two hundred and seventeen thousand to two hundred and forty-seven thousand souls, their boundaries agreeing as little as possible with those of the old provinces and their names, after the French model those of the rivers, recalling in no respect the old division. Each department was divided into seven circles of about thirty-three thousand souls, each circle into sixty to seventy communes. For the election of the two chambers the country had to be split up into ninety-four electoral districts of twenty thousand souls, divided into forty primary meetings of five hundred. The First Chamber was to consist of sixty-four members, with a salary of four thousand guilders a year, and to deliberate

on the laws proposed, which were to be approved or disapproved of by the Second of thirty members; together they formed the Representative Body. Each primary meeting named an elector, and the forty electors of the districts chose the representative. The Executive Council of five members, with a salary of twelve thousand guilders a year, was selected by the two Chambers; the First Chamber nominated three persons, the Second chose one of them; every year one member went out of office. The council was assisted by eight "agents" or ministers, with nine thousand guilders a year, for foreign affairs, war, navy, finance, justice, police, education, and economy. The financial resources were united, the debts consolidated, the taxes within two years were to be similarly apportioned; the complete separation of church and state was pronounced, so that after three years all churches would have to provide their own expenses.

The principles accepted in formulating this constitution were in the main that in place of the old aristocratic-federalistic republic, as it had maintained itself during more than two centuries, a state was to be founded one and indivisible, governed in accordance with the will of the people manifested through a representation elected by all the citizens and meeting publicly, with a powerful central administration, with personal liberty in state, church, and society, and with freedom of the press. Thus it was hoped to put an end to the faults, under which the old government had so terribly suffered: lack of a central authority, mutual jealousy of the provinces, tyranny of a certain class of the people, secret governmental activity, arbitrary administration of justice according to antiquated laws, financial confusion. The new government was not wanting in vigour, but rather in moderation. Exasperation was roused by the resolution of May 4th declaring the remaining part of the National Assembly, now the Constituent Assembly, as the Representative



Body stipulated by the constitution. Twenty members were immediately chosen for the Second Chamber, forty-three others formed the First Chamber. Daendels was very dissatisfied with the arrangement of the command over the Batavian army and the complete surrender in military matters to France; at the request of Delacroix the supreme command had been given to Joubert after the January *coup d'état*. The tyrannical measures of the new men affronted Daendels and the commander of the fleet, De Winter, and it was desired to break Ducange's fatal influence, reproached for much of what had occurred. At a banquet given by Delacroix (May 16th) Daendels inveighed against Ducange, and the ambassador complained to the Executive Council. Joubert gave Daendels an opportunity to flee to Paris, secretly supported by the French secretary of legation at The Hague, Champigny-Aubin, who was commissioned by his minister of foreign affairs, the clever and unprincipled Talleyrand, to keep an eye on his ambassador, and who attributed the latest measures to the "infernal genius" and "perfidious machinations" of the intriguing Ducange. The question with the Executive Council was how far the Directory at Paris would continue to lend its aid. Enlightened by Daendels and his friends, the Directory began to see that the Executive Council could no longer be supported; it had little confidence in Ducange and treated with slight consideration the new Batavian ambassador Buys, appointed in place of the suspected Meyer. It was disappointed in its expectation that the millions of Holland would at last flow into the French treasury, and it blamed for this the rulers at The Hague, thus cutting the ground from under their feet. The Directory was not interested in having the Jacobins govern at The Hague, if they did not furnish what France needed: money and ships. Fearing Jacobin disturbances in France, it had allied itself with the moderate ele-

ments and could not be satisfied with Jacobinism at The Hague. It refused to arrest Daendels for desertion. The general cultivated influential personages in Paris, especially Talleyrand, while he kept informed of what was doing in the Batavian republic. He found favour with Talleyrand, who demanded the banishment of the dangerous Ducange from the Batavian republic and had Delacroix recalled. The Directory was convinced that a Representative Body must be legally elected and that the Executive Council should be replaced by another of more moderate disposition. The Executive Council felt somewhat safer after concluding a treaty (June 1st) concerning the French soldiers personally profitable to the members of the Directory. It summoned Daendels to appear in court before June 6th, and when he did not come, suspended him from his rank of lieutenant-general.

On June 10th Daendels suddenly returned from Paris, with a silent consent to go on his own course, received with distinction by Joubert and taken under protection against the Council. A commission of "friends of the constitution" offered him a banquet on the 11th. The Executive Council resolved to arrest the givers of the banquet. In the two chambers several democratic members were ready to stand by the Executive Council in upholding authority by bloody means, if necessary, and the scaffold and the guillotine were mentioned. The two arrangers of the banquet, Pompe van Meerdervoort and Van Kretschmar, were captured by the police. The agent of war, Pijman, the head of the army, had finally joined the conspirators. With Spoors and Gogel he formed the company of three that now assumed the management. The three agents had a meeting with Daendels and some "patriotic citizens." By virtue of their office they appointed Daendels commander of the garrison at The Hague and ordered him to arrest the



five directors and eleven members of the chambers. With three companies of grenadiers Daendels went to the house of the Executive Council, which was sitting at table with Delacroix and Champigny. Van Langen resisted, but was overpowered and taken away; Vreede and Fynje hid in the garret; Delacroix was removed from the building after a brief resistance. Then Daendels betook himself with his soldiers to the First Chamber, where he arrested the president with some others; in the Second Chamber the same took place, after the president had been pulled from his chair. The violent party government had fallen, and the three agents, joined by those of justice and police, Tadema and La Pierre, declared themselves an Intermediary Executive Council. They chose Spoors as their president, assisted the very next day by an Intermediary Representative Body of forty-four members, summoned by themselves. A proclamation announced the event to the population, which was on the whole satisfied. Daendels, "a second Brutus," was the hero of the day. As speedily as possible, according to the constitution, a definitive government had to be established agreeable to the French Directory. De Winter, the admiral of Camperdown, and the able Schimelpenninck were sent to Paris, the latter to represent the Batavian republic more worthily than it had been hitherto represented. There was talk of punishing the members of the preceding government, some of them being suspected of fraudulent appropriation of the public money. But, Delacroix having now departed, the French *chargé d'affaires* Champigny declared against such measures and urged moderation, as did soon also the new ambassador Roberjot. The elections took place (July 31st), and over the entire country they gave a considerable majority to the moderates. The new Representative Body was divided into two parts, and the new Executive Council was generally praised. "The

revolution is ended," said Van de Kastelee, and a vigorous development could now begin under the powerful protection of France.

It was a long time before the passions roused in this turbulent year were quieted. The defeated democrats were not disposed to lay their heads in their laps, though some of them, including Vreede and Wiselius, withdrew in disappointment from public affairs. Naturally violent agitation arose in the clubs. Passionate declarations were published against the leaders of the *coup d'état* of June 12th, by the party of the ultras regarded as traitors to democracy, against Daendels himself; with little less vehemence Daendels and others demanded the punishment of the authors of the *coup d'état* of January 22d, the so-called "anarchists." Under these circumstances the opinion of the moderate fractions, that by a conciliation of conflicting views domestic peace must be restored, began more and more to gain the upper hand. The French government, enlightened by Schimmelpenninck and Champigny-Aubin as to the motives of the last *coup d'état*, had approved of it. Above all it did not want sharp prosecutions of the fallen magistrates, nor any military dictatorship of Daendels. It desired to throw "a veil" over all that had happened. At the end of November a general amnesty was proclaimed. Thus, under the guidance of Van Hooff, Spoors, and Daendels, who were the chief personages, the way was opened for domestic pacification. The revolution was now ended, and, under the new state institutions after the French-unionist model, attention could be devoted to the further development of reforms, to the restoration of peace abroad, and to the improvement of national prosperity terribly diminished during more than three years. The coöperation of the French government, the support of the moderate-unionist party and of the well-intentioned part of the population would soon lead to this, it was



confidently expected. But there were not a few, who were still unconvinced that the crisis was at an end; confidence in the new government was far from strong, and many awaited the uncertain future with anxiety. Some people considered annexation to France as the only remedy for the unfortunate state of affairs. And on the other hand there was still in number at least a strong Orange party, among the aristocratic nobility and the common people, which looked for an opportunity to throw off the French yoke and was even ready to sacrifice everything rather than to remain under French rule.





## CHAPTER XVIII

### GENERAL CONDITIONS ABOUT 1800

**A**MONG the fatal consequences of the alliance with France in May, 1795, the naval war stood foremost, which the young Batavian republic took upon itself. It was the beginning of an almost unbroken struggle of little less than twenty years, in which the Batavians saw themselves compelled to follow obediently all the vicissitudes of French policy, dependent as they were on the great sister republic, soon as a mighty empire fighting for hegemony in Europe, in the world. In this long and desperate war France had great expectations of the support, which the Batavian republic might furnish through its situation, its mariners, and its old sea power. The Batavian army could only play a subordinate part in the wars on land on account of its smallness in comparison with the huge, new armies. The terrible defeat at Camperdown had caused deep disappointment, after the Spanish fleet in February at St. Vincent had been almost as seriously hit by the English under Jervis, Parker, and Nelson. The Egyptian expedition of the young general Bonaparte, who had conquered Italy and forced Austria to the peace of Campo Formio, whereby the emperor had given up the Austrian Netherlands, was paralysed on August 1 and 2, 1798, by Nelson's brilliant victory over the French fleet at Aboukir. England ruled the seas more than ever before. What remained of the allied navies of France, Spain, and the



Batavian republic hardly dared venture outside of the harbours closely watched by English squadrons.

This all signified the ruin of the country's commerce. In 1795, instead of forty-three hundred ships in the preceding year, little more than sixteen hundred had entered the ports, and in the years following it was worse. The blockade pronounced by England caused every Dutch vessel to be declared a lawful prize by the war-ship or privateer that could seize upon it; every neutral vessel also sailing to Dutch ports was liable to confiscation by England. Commerce with Russia, carried on in 1794 by three hundred and forty ships, was in the next year continued by only sixteen. French privateers showed slight respect for Dutch goods in neutral vessels and were extremely troublesome to merchantmen daring to sail out. The only way of escaping trouble seemed to be secret navigating under a foreign flag. But even this was not always successful; false ship's papers could easily be recognised as such by English judges, which made the prize courts declare the vessel and cargo confiscated. The worst was that Dutch merchants did not hesitate to fit out secretly French or even English privateers, which chased after their own ships, so that they put in their pockets the insurance money, for which their property was insured, and moreover the value of the captured goods sold in France or England—a procedure that had been far from uncommon in previous war-times. Finally recourse was had to the use of foreign ships, with foreign captains and agents, for the transportation of Dutch goods, and this developed foreign navigation at the expense of that of the country. The carrying trade was lost to the Netherlands. Thus disappeared the great Dutch grain and lumber fleets, the schooners and smacks of Groningen and Friesland that conveyed grain and lumber from the Baltic to France and Spain; thus melted away the great commercial fleets,

which of old had everywhere displayed the Dutch flag. The East India Company, cut off from making returns, went rapidly towards ruin, and its abrogation by the constitution of 1798 was a necessary consequence of its wretched condition. Its goods lay rotting in the warehouses for want of ships to transport them. Help was sought in "simulated" sales to neutrals. The Americans in particular made use of the opportunity and sent yearly three richly laden vessels from Batavia to Amsterdam. Commerce with the West Indies also stood still, and the conquest of Surinam by the English in August, 1799, put an end to the chief Dutch possession in those regions. The complete decay of the republic's maritime commerce had naturally a fatal influence upon its industry. Hundreds of manufacturers and workmen, constrained by lack of bread, left the dead manufacturing cities and removed to foreign countries. The first to suffer were the provinces which lived almost exclusively by commerce on the sea: Holland, Zealand, Friesland, City and Land. On the other hand trade on land increased somewhat, particularly that in agricultural products and cattle. The Rhine commerce with Germany flourished; commerce with France increased, especially that with the former Belgian provinces. But this land commerce could not make up for the want of maritime commerce.

Of no less importance was the loss of the extensive banking business over the whole world, in which so many people had engaged during the eighteenth century; the interruption of regular communication with the country and the uncertainty of foreign payments in a time of general war caused the money business of Amsterdam to decline in as terrible a manner as had been the case with the traffic in goods. In an investigation made by the new government in 1795 the Amsterdam Bank appeared to be in a dangerous condition on account of its



great advances to the sinking East India Company. The city of Amsterdam supported its famous credit institution by repeated loans, but the bank continued to fall off with the diminution of the commerce that usually fed it. Large losses were further suffered by the entire population in consequence of the non-payment, so long as the war in Europe lasted, of the interest on foreign government obligations now amounting annually to forty millions. English, Spanish, and Austrian securities, soon also Russian bonds, of which millions were here sold, inflicted great injury on the wealthy class and indirectly upon all society. Poverty increased frightfully; orphan asylums and poor houses were filled; at Amsterdam in 1796 no less than one-quarter of the population was supported as paupers; travellers in Holland were struck by the multitude of beggars. The cost of living rose to a dangerous height in the winter of 1798-1799, while the number of people assisted rapidly increased: at Amsterdam it amounted in this winter to eighty-one thousand out of a population of nearly two hundred thousand. The decline of The Hague after the stadtholder's departure was evidenced by the disappearance of costly carriages and clothing, by empty mansions, while the aristocratic families retired to cheap dwellings in back streets. The material condition of the Batavian republic could not be called wholly desperate. It possessed a population of two millions, or thirty-two hundred to the square mile, a density of population, with which that of France, England, and Saxony could not be compared. The national wealth was in 1800 estimated at three milliards of interest-bearing property, the annual income at two hundred millions. The continuous war, with the cessation of a large part of commerce and industry, demanded severe sacrifices from the nation, while the finances of the state had been in anything but a satisfactory condition in the last years of the stadtholder's rule. In 1795 the amount

of the ordinary revenue was over sixteen and a half millions, that of the expenditures fifty and a half millions. In the first year of the consolidation of revenue, debts, and taxes of all the provinces (1799) the revenue amounted to 36,350,000 guilders and the expenditures of this year of war to 79,666,000. Such a deficit must in time result in the financial ruin of the state. All these unfavourable figures, as by a stroke of magic, would be modified, whenever there might be success in securing peace; then the idle capital would come up with the restoration of commerce and industry. Longingly men watched the course of the negotiations at Rastadt, Lunéville, and Amiens, preparations for a peace that would include the republic as soon as France consented to it.

Loud were the complaints of the decline of the nation. In 1791 Van Hamelsveld<sup>1</sup> drew a dark picture of the condition of the Dutch people. Neglect of education; marriage and the family no longer honoured and pure; society spoiled by etiquette and extravagance; honesty, thrift, good faith regarded as antiquated ideas; art, literature, and science languishing; religion and the church suffering from superstition, infidelity, and indifference; the great world going down in luxury, the citizens following after, the peasants living on in ignorance, the lower classes in the cities slavishly dependent or going to the bad, so that in Europe there was perhaps no community more degenerate—to this he and others testify concerning the moral state of the nation at the end of the century. In the Dutch cities amid all the misery dissolute life prevailed; nowhere in the world were to be seen more open exhibitions of drunkenness and immorality. Money was the main thing in marriage, and men did not think of it in the upper classes until they had enjoyed life sufficiently; in the lower classes as a rule

<sup>1</sup> See Van Hamelsveld, *Over den zedelijken toestand der Nederl. natie* (Rotterdam, 1791).



marriage was "from necessity"; violation of the marriage vow belonged to the regularly appearing vices. Domestic life had changed from the former simplicity amidst the luxury that had doubled or tripled the costs of the citizen's housekeeping. Expensive fashions, prescribed every year from Paris, had now driven out the old national costume among the middle classes, and everywhere French gentlemen and English ladies were seen with powdered hair, foreign coats, metal buttons, superabundant gold ornaments. Luxury was remarked also in eating and drinking, when silver dishes, beautiful porcelain, choice food, foreign fruits and delicacies, fine wines and pastry appeared on the table of the middle class of citizens, while poorer men no longer lived on peas and beans but upon potatoes, weak coffee or tea alternating with gin becoming more and more the popular drink. The excessive smoking of tobacco was a national custom, and a Hollander without a pipe in his mouth was a rare sight. Smoking passed for a remedy against the "damp climate," and boys eight to ten years old were encouraged to smoke. The severe shocks given to society in the last twenty years had their effect and prevented the development of the germs of better conditions; party strife, a succession of dangers caused restlessness that did not fail to sow mutual mistrust. Let everybody look out for himself became the motto in the constant turning of the wheel of fortune. Art, literature, and science could not flourish in such an atmosphere. Coarse political lampoons, sharp magazine articles, bad reading formed the majority of what was printed; few scientific works of importance appeared. The numerous learned societies languished under the unfavourable circumstances; the universities fell behind, and some of them numbered almost as many students as professors. Literature experienced years of decline, in which the tasteless Arend Fokke Simonszoon with his

jests began to eclipse the serious novels of Wolff and Deken, and Feith and Helmers with their sentimental poetry enjoyed the preference over the gifted *Bilderdijk*. De Wacker van Zon and Van Woensel handled satire cleverly, the usual fruit of periods of decay, in their comical romances and magazine articles. The art of painting declined in importance, and the few painters, engravers, and draughtsmen of repute lived by copying examples of the good time. In all respects the time of about 1800 was a gloomy period, so that the question often rose whether the Batavian nation was not at the end of its course and was not speedily to disappear as a nation.

The new machine of state did not work smoothly, and the laxness of the new government of moderate unionists after the victory of 1798 brought slight improvement. Great uncertainty was caused by the continual disturbances of the revolutionists, who looked for a new upset in France and a new imitation of it here. The Jacobin clubs in the large cities, which many Catholics had joined from fear of a Protestant reaction, vigorously opposed Orange and federalistic tendencies and put their hope in the new French ambassador Lombard. Amid the growing discontent with the government the Orange party began to cherish hopes of a restoration of the stadtholder's rule. Europe now stood in arms against France; the Russian emperor, Paul I., was to put into the scales the great power of his gigantic realm in opposition to the hated revolution and coöperate with England and Austria, though Prussia still remained neutral under the new king, Frederick William III. The house of Orange might expect a change in its fate. William V., sojourning at Hampton Court and more occupied with court festivities than with political plans, began to see a chance of restoration. And his sons no less so. While the hereditary prince William, who looked for more from



Prussia than from England, had entered the Prussian service as a lieutenant-general and had settled at Berlin with his family, the young prince Frederick was Austrian master of ordnance and commander of the army in Italy, where he died from a lingering illness on January 6, 1799, at Padua. During negotiations at Lille the house of Orange was frequently considered; Lord Malmesbury tried to obtain good conditions for it. In August and September of 1798 there was thought of the possibility of an English landing in the Batavian republic. In such an event the hereditary prince would accompany the invading army. The hope of a rising in the Batavian republic and of Prussian assistance was not excluded. The plans were far-reaching: not only the Batavian republic but also Belgium, where a peasant revolt against conscription had just broken out, must be freed from France and united into a powerful double state as a bulwark against France, which was to be ruled according to the principles of the old Pacification of Ghent. If the republic only was liberated, the stadtholder's government was to be restored and the union of Utrecht to be adapted to modern times. Reliance was placed upon the growing aversion to the French, upon the prevailing dissatisfaction with the course of affairs, upon the numerous Orange partisans, upon the possibility of Daendels' coöperation. The general counter revolution must break out everywhere at once, as soon as a small English expedition of three thousand men should land at Scheveningen or a Russian or Prussian army should approach the eastern frontiers.

Thus preparations were made under the deep impression of the first victory of the Austrian army commanded by archduke Charles at Stockach in Baden (March, 1799), while the Austrians and Russians in Italy drove back Moreau. It seemed as if France under the Directory would be ruined by domestic dissensions.

The revolution was drawing to an end, while its greatest general, Bonaparte, was consuming his forces in Egypt. Late in 1798 the plan of an Anglo-Russian landing in Holland was discussed by the powers, but England, offering its money, preferred a Prussian-Russian attack from the east. Prussia refused, and so in May, 1799, the plan was again taken up of an Anglo-Russian landing to restore the old forms of government in the Batavian republic. By the treaty of June 22d Russia was to furnish seventeen thousand five hundred and England thirteen thousand or at least eight thousand men; an English fleet was to bring the Russians. The command of the campaign was to be put into the hands of the aged English general, Ralph Abercromby, whose place was finally taken by the incapable duke of York, after the English corps had been raised to twenty-five thousand men by the unexpectedly numerous enlistments of volunteers. Abercromby was now to lead only the first division sent out, with which the Russian force under general Hermann was to act. The original plan was for the English to penetrate into South Holland, while the Russians appeared on the northeast and, as was still hoped, the Prussians on the eastern border. Concerning the Batavian fleet, the captains, Van Braam and Van Capellen, in case of an engagement were to excite a revolt in favour of Orange, and the fleet was then to join the English. In the Batavian republic and Belgium a rising prepared by secret agents must break out against the hated French and the existing government. At the end of July the hereditary prince left Berlin and went to Lingon in order from there to lead the expected rising. On August 13th the English landing fleet under admiral Duncan sailed for the Batavian republic with Abercromby's first corps of twelve thousand men and directed its course to Helder to destroy the Batavian fleet and to attack Amsterdam. In consequence of tempestuous



weather it did not appear until seven days later at Texel, the vanguard of more troops under the duke of York.

All these preparations naturally had remained no secret in the Batavian republic, and with anxiety the reports of the expected attack were received. The Executive Council at the head of the state formed a government that could develop little power. The defence on land was to be managed by the brave and experienced French general Brune, thirty-six years old and a pupil of Masséna, a zealous Jacobin and since January commander of the French troops about eighteen thousand in number in the Batavian republic, coöperating with the Batavian troops under Daendels and Dumonceau. When in the spring the reports of the expected landing became more definite, the Executive Council finally proclaimed a state of siege and called out the national guard of thirty thousand men. The Franco-Batavian army was divided by Brune into three corps: that under Dumonceau in Groningen and Friesland, that under Daendels in North Holland, that under the French generals Desjardins and Rewbell in Zeeland. Brune was placed with a small reserve in and around The Hague. The fleet, which after the catastrophe of Camperdown had been brought up again to twenty-four war-ships, was in the early spring of 1799 made ready in part at Texel for an invasion of Ireland, and, when this plan was dropped, for an expedition to Java. But the reports of the projected English landing caused the latter plan also to be given up, and the rear-admiral Samuel Story, a naval officer of repute, lay with his squadron of eight large ships and some frigates in the roadstead of Texel, when on August 20th an English fleet of fifteen large ships and fifty frigates hove in sight, and a British deputation of three officers came to him in the name of Lord Duncan, the English commander, to demand the surrender of the fleet for the prince of Orange, the "law-

ful sovereign," under whose flag the fleet might join the English. The deputation found an opportunity to circulate in the fleet some exciting proclamations, and the consequences appeared in the growing turbulence on some vessels, though Story proudly refused to surrender as did also Colonel Gilquin, the commander of Helder. The hostile fleet put to sea for a few days on account of a storm but returned on the 26th under vice-admiral Mitchell to the number of eleven ships of the line and on the morning of the 27th undertook a landing at Keeten between Callantsoog and Huisduinen. The landing succeeded, and the Batavian troops under general Van Guericke stationed there by Daendels had to retreat after heavy losses; Gilquin evacuated Helder by order of Daendels, whereupon Story fell back to Vlieter amid increasing confusion on his ships. The evident hesitation of the commanders and the Orange flags on the land batteries had no good effect upon the feeling in the Batavian fleet. On the 30th the English fleet under the prince's flag began sailing to Vlieter, when the irresolute Story, after a fruitless attempt to make his men fight, offered to remain at a sufficient distance and to wait for a decision from The Hague on the demand for surrender. While the crews were breaking out into mutiny, Story called his captains together; in face of the enemy's crushing superiority and of the treason upon the fleet the council of war resolved to surrender fleet and men, but as prisoners of war under the Batavian flag. Mitchell, however, took possession of the fleet for the prince and had the prince's flag hoisted on all the ships amidst the sailors' shouts of "Huzza!" and "Up with Orange!" After an inspection by the hereditary prince, who was on Mitchell's fleet, the large ships sailed for England and remained under the prince's flag and their own officers in the prince's service as a separate division of the English navy. Great was the indignation



in the republic at the conduct of the fleet's commanders. A naval council investigated it and punished some of the captains by dismissal. Story, Van Braam, and Van Capellen were by contumacy banished, with forfeiture of life and property, as "perjured, dishonourable, and infamous traitors." This was the inglorious end of the Batavian fleet formed at so great cost. The success of the English landing and Daendels' weak opposition to it brought him reproach as a proof of incapacity, even as a beginning of treason. He did not think of treason for an instant but was really surprised by events and by the enemy's superior force, as were Brune and the Batavian government, which applied to the French for help provided the independence of the country remained complete, this being readily promised by the new Directory. This promise revived courage, and the Executive Council assisted in the defence of the threatened country. Invested with ample power, Brune commanded Daendels to defend the fatherland foot by foot. He arranged his troops in the best way to protect Amsterdam. The Batavian general submitted entirely to his judgment. Fortunately for the defenders there was in most provinces no disturbance; the hereditary prince's friends had exaggerated the Orange partisanship of the population. Many Orangemen were averse to a prince brought back by England, as he would naturally be dependent upon the old rival and would have to follow this rival's wishes just as was now done for France. What would be gained by a change of masters? they asked, remembering how England had acted five years earlier.

Dangerous appeared the invasion of North Holland, where measures were taken to resist the enemy, especially in Amsterdam formidably strengthened with inundations and forts. The English force under command of Abercromby did not dare to venture far into the

country without the Russians, now that the general rising did not occur. Daendels fell back slowly before the superior hostile army, which pushed him to Alkmaar. On September 9th Abercromby with his seventeen thousand men had come no further, while the French and Batavians about twenty-three thousand men strong were in number his master. Brune on the 10th made an attack on the enemy's position in Zijpe, but was repulsed with heavy loss. The arrival of new troops brought the English army up to twenty-two thousand men, now commanded by the duke of York, who on the 13th was joined by eight thousand, on the 16th by almost as many more Russians under the generals Hermann and Essen. With this superior force of nearly fifty thousand men York on the 19th attacked at Bergen the army of Brune and Daendels but after success at first and a bloody battle, in which Daendels distinguished himself, was defeated with the loss of twenty-three hundred killed and wounded and eighteen hundred prisoners mostly Russians, while Abercromby had to leave the already occupied Hoorn; the Dutch troops lost twenty-six hundred, the French eight hundred men. The lack of discipline of the Anglo-Russian troops, particularly of the Russians, caused general indignation; at Haarlem the Russian prisoners were even stoned. The hope of a complete victory was aroused among the allied French and Batavians, while the discouraged English and Russians began to blame one another for the defeat. The Executive Council at The Hague saw the presence of the English and Russians with growing anxiety. Fearing complete "destruction" of the country, now that war was waged on their own territory, some entered secretly into suspicious negotiations with Prussia and the hereditary prince. Some agents, especially that for foreign affairs, Van der Goes, and other members of the government were involved in these secret negotiations closely connected with the plan



for restoring the Oranges. De Vos van Steenwijk was sent to Berlin to promote "good offices and intercession" among the belligerent powers in the interest of the so ardently desired neutrality. At The Hague the Prussian ambassador Bielfeld had obtained from Van der Goes information concerning the disposition of the Executive Council to throw itself into the arms of Prussia. There was readiness to restore the Oranges with an improvement of the old government and granting of the wishes of the patriots. De Vos referred to the American government as the best form and to the hereditary prince as the proper president. But he met in Berlin with slight sympathy for his "chimerical negotiation." As France got wind of the affair, he received on October 1st the friendly "insinuation" to return to The Hague. At the same time Mollerus, a partisan of Orange, was sent to the hereditary prince. He went farther than De Vos at Berlin and in the name of his friends opened the prospect of a revolution, by which the house of Orange would secure the sovereignty under "a sort of English constitution." The hereditary prince dared not act without his father's consent, and Mollerus then went to England. These secret discussions did not remain unknown in Paris, and a second French ambassador, the former Parisian doctor Deforgues, appeared at The Hague to watch affairs with Florent Guyot, while Brune, reinforced to thirty-three thousand men, took measures for defence. The English and Russians renewed the attack on October 2d in the vicinity of Alkmaar, where Brune after sharp fighting at Schoorl and Bergen and a loss of sixteen hundred men resolved to retreat. Soon conditions at the scene of war were completely changed. A new battle at Castricum (October 6th) ended unfavourably for the attacking English and Russians; in consequence of the breaking of their line by Brune at the head of his cavalry and of the good conduct of the Batavians,

they suffered severe losses, which made the easily discouraged York think of giving up the campaign. After a council of war he resolved, to the astonishment of Brune himself, to return to England and began by evacuating Alkmaar, followed by the French and Batavians. Retreating to Zijpe York, though in a strong position, saw himself obliged on the 14th to negotiate. The result was an agreement, which was confirmed on the 19th at Alkmaar and resembled very much a capitulation. For free retreat York promised the return of the batteries at Helder in good condition and the liberation of eight thousand prisoners. The embarkment of the troops took place from the last days of October to the end of November. The hereditary prince deeply disappointed went to England on October 21st. The fortunate campaign—as Brune boasted—was “terminated by a profitable and glorious treaty,” though remark was made upon the way he let York and his army go free and did not insist on the restitution of the Batavian fleet. He ended his reports by testifying to the “tranquil and methodical courage” of the Batavians with the “brilliant intrepidity” of the French as the decisive elements in the successfully finished campaign.

The ambiguous attitude of the Batavian government had awakened suspicion among the Paris Directors, while Daendels showed dissatisfaction with the little confidence placed in him. The ambassador Florent Guyot was recalled, and Deforgues received orders to have removed the members of the government favouring Orange and in particular some of the agents. These latter were rescued by the events of the 18th of Brumaire (November 9th), when the general Bonaparte, called back from Egypt by the Directory in its need, overturned the hated government easily and substituted for it the Consulate of three men with Siéyès and Rogier-Ducos—the last form of republican rule possible in France, and De-



forgues was recalled with Brune by the minister of foreign affairs Talleyrand. Deforgues was replaced by Sémonville, who made himself notorious by his excessive desire to draw personal profit from his office, and Brune by Augereau, thoroughly acquainted with Bonaparte's wishes. The tone, which the new leader of the French government, the energetic Bonaparte, caused to be adopted at The Hague, proved that in Paris no opposition would be tolerated and that obedience was demanded: "He grants friendship, he requires confidence; he assures protection, he desires fidelity; he promises benefits, he expects gratitude," said Sémonville in his name. There seems to have been some thought at Paris of making Augereau the head of the Batavian state. The Executive Council showed plainly that it had had enough of the close alliance with France and that it longed for peace or at least neutrality, so that commerce, by which alone the republic could exist, might be again restored. But Bonaparte was not to be dissuaded from his plan of using the Batavian republic for the benefit of France. He demanded the complete execution of the treaty of The Hague so far as finances and military affairs were concerned, and was not touched by the representations of the ambassador Schimmelpenninck or by the address brought by admiral De Winter telling of unbearable burdens, which before 1800 had brought up expenditures to over one hundred millions, while the ordinary revenue scarcely amounted to thirty millions. The First Consul wanted money for his wars and was angry, when general Marmont sent by him to the republic could not place a loan of only twelve million francs in Amsterdam. It became worse, when an attempt to obtain fifty millions from the Batavians failed. He began to threaten: "We have right and might on our side," and Sémonville urged acquiescence in his wishes. The Executive Council saw itself compelled to furnish the troops desired. Bonaparte's

demands increased constantly, while Augereau acted as lord and master in the Batavian republic, roughly imposing his will and extorting money for himself and his officers. The weak Council, working in Berlin and Paris for neutrality, got into an untenable position towards the population, which was financially exhausted and since 1795 had paid twenty-two and a half per cent. on its property and twenty-eight per cent. on its income in forced contributions. It was evident that so long as France continued to conquer, it would not hear to the complete independence or neutrality of the Batavian republic. France needed the republic for its war with England or for possible trouble with Prussia; it did not want annexation, but required dependence and considered the necessity of removing the stadtholder's house "an irrevocably settled affair," as Bonaparte expressed it.

In these circumstances people began both here and at Paris to think seriously of a thorough change in the government of the Batavian republic. In August, 1800, Schimmelpenninck, whose position in Paris was becoming more difficult before the demands of the French government, appeared in the republic. It was evident to him that a change must come. Sémonville was of the opinion that the disposition of the people and the interest of France required "the reconciliation of whatever was useful, that experience of the ancient system had introduced in the administration, with the institutions which healthful philosophy has planted on the tomb of prejudices," which signified reaction against the excessive changes of 1798. Schimmelpenninck favoured a constitution modelled after that of the United States; Irhoven van Dam and Pijman wanted executive power in the hands of a president with an insignificant Legislative Body and great independence of the departments. The committee of the Legislative Body to examine the plan of Pijman and Irhoven van Dam, that favoured by



Augereau or Bonaparte, was ready in June but saw its proposition rejected by fifty-five votes against twelve. The Executive Council, knowing what Bonaparte wanted, chose on June 10th the energetic Pijman as one of its members. It was time, because Bonaparte was becoming impatient, and the revolutionary elements in the Legislative Body found reënforcement in the new elections. On the other side the adherents of the house of Orange began to defend themselves; the majority of them showed a readiness to compromise, and some corresponded with moderate but discontented former patriots. This disposition of the Orange partisans hastened the plans promoted by Bonaparte for a *coup d'état*, this time again in favour of the moderates of all parties. Augereau, who went to Paris in the summer, placed himself on his return at the disposal of Pijman and his friends. It appeared that Bonaparte approved of the plan of Pijman and Van Dam, but desired to know who was to be elected president. For the moment there was no person suitable for the place. Van Dam proposed instead of the president to put at the head a State Government, and this was accepted. The expected *coup d'état* began on September 14th. A proclamation of the Executive Council submitted to the primary meetings the modified plan of Pijman and Van Dam as "the happy mean" between the varying opinions. The First Chamber of the Legislative Body, on the 18th by twenty-eight against twenty-six votes, declared the proclamation illegal and referred the plan again to a commission. Two members of the Council refused their coöperation. The three others with Augereau's aid took the government into their hands, sealed the doors of the Legislative Body's building, declared by a new proclamation this college suspended, and promised to maintain order. The plebiscite of October 1st resulted unfavourably for the plan, as only 16,771 votes were cast for it and 52,219

against it, but there were 416,419 voters, and those staying at home were considered simply as voting for it, whereupon the new regulation of the state was promulgated on October 16th. The draught of one hundred and six articles thus adopted decreed that a state government of twelve members should have the complete direction of the state. For the first time the three active members of the Executive Council were to select seven persons for it and these five others; later the governments of the departments were to nominate four persons for a place in the State Government, which was to present two of them for choice to the Legislative Body. This Body, deprived of all influence on the executive power, reduced to thirty-five members and meeting only twice a year, was merely to vote on laws offered by the State Government. The departmental governments, of seven to fifteen members, were to enjoy great independence, so also the communal governments. In place of agents "councils" of three to six members were to manage the branches of the general government. So it was hoped to strengthen the power of the central government without encroaching too much upon the old provincial autonomy.







## CHAPTER XIX

### LAST YEARS OF THE BATAVIAN REPUBLIC

**R**ECONCILIATION of parties was the watchword, under which the new regulation of the state was carried through: on one side yielding to the popular principles of provincial federalism and local independence; on the other side approach of the elements favouring old institutions to the ideas of equality of all before the law, union of the state, and a powerful central authority. Compared with the regulation of 1798 the new constitution, giving citizens slight influence in the government, might be regarded as a work of reaction, and the extreme revolutionists disdained the compromise as treason to the cause of the revolution. On the contrary many Orange partisans declared themselves not unwilling to take part again in the government together with the moderates among the men of 1795; so great was their number that people spoke of a revival of the aristocratic ruling party after the short victory of the now defeated democracy. The names of the members of the State Government indicated the conciliation and the moderation of principles, which had characterised the entire *coup d'état* of September, 1801. After the great victories of Bonaparte at Marengo and of Moreau at Hohenlinden over the Austrians, who had to relinquish all Italy to the French, gave up southern Germany, and even saw Vienna threatened, Austria showed an inclination for peace, while the French people also desired the

end of the long war. On February 9, 1801, at Lunéville the peace of France and its allies with emperor and empire had been brought about, and both had confirmed the independence of the Batavian republic. Even England, after the murder of the Russian czar Paul I. and the accession of his son Alexander I. more favourable to France, standing alone and again menaced with a landing from Boulogne, had allowed Pitt, the champion of war against France, to retire and on October 1st had assented to the preliminaries of London. On the negotiations for the "continental peace" the Batavian republic had had no direct influence. Prussia had now given up the idea of the restoration of the Oranges and thought only of an indemnity partly to be found in Germany, partly to be paid by the republic for the Nassau domains. When there was talk of a president, the house of Orange and the hereditary prince had been thought of, but Bonaparte would not hear to it from fear of the renewal of English or Prussian dynastic influence in the sister state now dependent upon France. The negotiation based on the preliminaries at Amiens for definitive peace between France and England could hardly be finished without the interested Batavian republic, the less so as England had offered in London to give back all the conquered colonies in east and west except Ceylon. So Schimmelpenninck might be admitted at Amiens as the Batavian negotiator. He received the invitation to take part in the discussions, begun three months earlier and in fact ended, on January 1, 1802. The French government regarded the signature of the treaty by the Batavian ambassador as indifferent to its validity. Among themselves the French diplomatists spoke contemptuously of such countries as the Batavian republic, "vanquished and conquered," which "ought to spare us the trouble of reminding them of the principle of their present existence; this existence they hold



from us, we owe them nothing and they owe us everything." On January 11th Schimmelpenninck was admitted to the negotiation. He tried to secure concessions both from the French negotiator Joseph Bonaparte and from the English Lord Cornwallis; numerous memoirs he presented in support of his requests. But all his eloquent remonstrances availed nothing, and as little did the attempts to win for the Batavian republic the favour of Sémonville, Talleyrand, and Joseph Bonaparte by bribery, half a million being provided for the purpose. The Batavian government had to be content with a note from Talleyrand and an oral declaration from Joseph, both stating that after the signing of the final treaty the First Consul would be ready to negotiate with it on one thing and another. People longed for peace, however it might be. And so Schimmelpenninck signed at last on March 27, 1802, the treaty, which was to give the ardently desired peace.

Least of all was this peace honourable, and for the nation it was necessary to provide the treaty with "notes." Against the loss of Ceylon mention was made of the return of Guyana and the Cape and other possessions; the old treaties with England were considered lapsed as well as the stipulation concerning the striking of the flag; claims on account of captured ships might be prosecuted before the English courts; nothing was said of the definitive loss of the fleet surrendered at Helder. The negotiator was greeted thankfully, because the chief aim, peace, had been attained. About the same time the house of Orange was finally provided for. William V., disappointed in his great expectations from England's support, had left that country and departed for his Nassau states to live in the castle of Oranienstein near Dietz. New combinations being proposed by France and Prussia, the hereditary prince went to Paris in February, the first of the German princes to

show himself there after the revolution and to humiliate himself before the powerful Bonaparte. With the help of presents to Talleyrand and other French statesmen or their wives he obtained a result that was incorporated in the treaty of July 3d. As an indemnity for the loss of its position in the Netherlands, the house of Orange received possession of the bishopric of Fulda, the abbeys of Korvey and Weingarten, the imperial cities of Dortmund, Isny, and Buchhorn, giving a yearly income of half a million guilders. William V. refused the "stolen goods," but the hereditary prince accepted and thenceforth could call himself prince of Orange-Fulda, while his father ruled Nassau only and had an English annuity for the war-ships and commercial vessels surrendered to England. All ties between the house of Orange and the Batavian republic were thus broken except those of historical tradition which were once again to bring together Orange and the Netherlands.

The regulation of several matters awakened pleasant expectation of the new situation under guidance of the State Government. The desired peace was obtained, the independence of the country recognised by France and the other powers, the stadtholder government abolished with the consent of the stadtholder's family. People thought the period of conciliation and definitive settlement might now begin. Among the whole population a spirit of toleration of varying opinions was not to be mistaken, but on the other hand it encountered serious difficulties. The attitude of the First Consul at Paris towards the wishes of the unsympathetic State Government occasioned trouble. The finances remained very unsatisfactory. The estimates of 1802 put an ordinary revenue of thirty-one millions against expenditures amounting to nearly sixty-six millions; a new loan of thirty millions had to be issued to keep things going, while the First Consul made new demands. And where



were new taxes to be found? "Excepting air and water there is almost nothing left that is not taxed," said an experienced financier. Although commerce revived immediately after the peace and four thousand ships entered the ports in this year, confidence in the permanence of peace was soon shaken by the prevailing political uncertainty. There was everywhere a conflict of interests and views, in which the weak State Government stood powerless. In the summer of 1802 Schimmelpenninck on his annual visit to the fatherland was entreated to lend a hand towards a new change in the constitution. A pamphlet spoke of an interview between him and the dissatisfied generals Daendels and Dumonceau to prepare such a change. The State Government kept watch of the two generals, but Bonaparte for the time being wanted no more changes in the Batavian republic. This attitude of the Consul saved the State Government. In the autumn Daendels, accused in the highest court of "indecent language" concerning the government, resigned and went to Heerde to devote himself to farming. Schimmelpenninck in discouragement transferred his post in Paris to the inexperienced Karel de Vos van Steenwijk and had himself appointed ambassador to London. The removal of the influential diplomatist and the suspicious activity of the English and Russian ambassadors at The Hague seemed to indicate that the Batavian republic, longing for neutrality and independence, inclined towards the enemies of France. Rumours of war revived owing to English hesitation to evacuate Malta, Alexandria, and some colonial possessions, while Bonaparte annexed Piedmont, caused himself to be elected president of the Cisalpine republic, and asserted French influence both in the Batavian republic and in Switzerland, finally making his predominance felt in the reorganisation of the empire, so that it became dependent upon France. Already England was receiving the French

emigrants and furthering their plots; Bonaparte was beginning to exclude British industry from French ports and to announce the sending of more troops to the Batavian republic; a press war in England was being waged against the hated Consul. In March, 1803, George III. declared England's honour and interests threatened, and Bonaparte retorted with complaints of England's challenge. Two months later England opened hostilities by seizing twelve hundred French and Batavian mercantile vessels, whereupon Bonaparte had Hanover occupied. Pitt and Bonaparte renewed the old duel.

The occupation of Middelburg and all Walcheren by French troops under general Monnet in April was a result of these events. To all the chief cities French garrisons came unexpectedly, and at The Hague twenty-five hundred men appeared to the deep vexation of government and people at this insult to the national honour. In very positive terms Bonaparte demanded coöperation in the new war. He asked the Batavian republic to support twenty-five thousand men under a French general as chief commander, besides strong Batavian-French squadrons at Texel and the mouth of the Meuse, and to prepare three transport fleets of three hundred vessels sufficient for sixty thousand men. An extraordinary deputation to Paris tried to reduce these demands, but Bonaparte remained inexorable, and on June 25th a convention had to be signed engaging to support at most eighteen thousand French troops in addition to a Dutch army of sixteen thousand men, all under a French general-in-chief. Furthermore it was agreed to build five ships of the line and five frigates with one hundred gunboats and two hundred and fifty flat-bottomed transports destined for about sixty thousand men and four thousand horses. This force was to work with the great invading fleet made ready in the French ports. A common peace only was to be concluded, and France guaran-



teed the inviolability of Batavian territory in Europe and the restoration of colonies lost in the war. A deputation from the State Government humbly greeted the Consul at Brussels. "I am not your enemy, I wish you well, but you must follow my march," declared Bonaparte to the commission. Not for a moment would he give complete political independence to the Batavian republic. If intriguers were listened to, he warned that he might have to annex the republic, which would not be difficult to do. The State Government fell in his estimation, though it submitted slavishly to his demands, because he believed it secretly hostile. It allowed Verhuell to be raised to the chief command and gathered at Flushing in the spring of 1804 a great fleet of three hundred and seventy-eight ships. With this fleet Verhuell in the summer went to Ostend and Dunkirk in three divisions and fighting sharply with the enemy on the Flemish coast; nothing came of the proposed expedition against England, and so it was in the following spring, when Verhuell sailed from Dunkirk to Ambleteuse to await the French squadrons from Brest. But Bonaparte was not satisfied with this help; he always wanted more. Speedily he thought of a change in the Batavian government. The idea gained ground that a government of a single head was best, having a president invested with great power. The chief difficulty was, who should be made president. From all sides came complaints of the weak and inconstant State Government. It acted very incautiously and only gave way step by step to Bonaparte's demands, brought to The Hague by Verhuell and by Schimmelpenninck again placed in Paris. The State Government referred to the three hundred and forty millions added to the Batavian debt since 1795, making it now over eleven hundred millions, while the population declining in prosperity had contributed more than six hundred millions in eight years.

The great change in France, where Bonaparte became Consul for life from 1802 and Emperor on May 18, 1804, was the sign for a modification here, and threatening was the new emperor's voice, when he told his Senate that "the reunion of Holland to the Empire would have been the complement of our commercial system." Report came that Napoleon had summoned Schimmelpenninck to Aix-la-Chapelle to confer with him and Sémonville. Schimmelpenninck met the emperor on September 12th at Cologne and heard there that the latter was determined to put him at the head of Batavian affairs in place of the powerless State Government, threatening in case of refusal immediately to incorporate the republic with France. Schimmelpenninck, appreciating the difficulties of the position, hesitated, but quickly yielded and returned to The Hague, where he found the State Government discouraged and ready to transfer the authority to him. The ruler, appointed by the emperor's command, went to Paris at the end of October to make with the emperor the necessary preparations; he declared himself willing to undertake the task, provided the fatherland were not brought to ruin by the ally's too heavy demands. Negotiations over the new constitution continued for some time. At Paris Schimmelpenninck hoped to obtain a reduction of the demands made upon the Batavian republic from year to year by Napoleon as Consul, and thus at least "to preserve a simulacrum of a national existence." Schimmelpenninck held out against the emperor and managed to convince him of the desirability of moderation in his demands. The negotiation concerning the form of government was difficult. The idea of an American constitution, ever in Schimmelpenninck's mind, found no favour in the emperor's eyes: "I do not care to see this form of government become contagious in Europe," he declared. While negotiations dragged along, the distress and confusion increased in



the unfortunate republic; the passive attitude of the population became boundless indifference or dull opposition; commerce suffered, government securities fell, the finances were in the greatest disorder; the State Government seemed about to end in complete chaos. Meanwhile the general Marmont and Sémonville went on with their arbitrary measures, until amid popular anger at this shameless violation of independence on November 23d the State Government, energetic for a moment, sent out a mandate to obey no command of French military or civil officers unless relating to defence against the enemy. At the same time the Legislative Body rejected the estimates for 1805 and the issue of a new "voluntary gift" of forty millions. Marmont protested against the mandate and threatened to put a garrison in The Hague again, whereupon the State Government suspended its mandate "in expectation of the emperor's opinion." This was not long delayed and was embodied in a sharp note of December 10th, in which the emperor expressed his indignation at the "scandalous note" and demanded its withdrawal by the government "under penalty of being considered as having put itself in a state of war against France and of being treated accordingly." Within forty-eight hours satisfaction must be given with removal of four members of the State Government, whom he regarded as instigators of the affair. The despised Government bowed its head again and dismissed the four members, excusing itself by attributing all the blame to them. The emperor hesitated between annexation and maintaining an apparent independence, either under a president as Schimmelpenninck, or under a prince as the prince of Nassau-Weilburg, related to the house of Orange and friendly to France, or as one of the emperor's brothers or brothers-in-law—Jerome, Louis, Murat. Even Schimmelpenninck seems to have been thought of as prince, according to his own account. Later the emperor

acknowledged that he would not have postponed the annexation of the Batavian republic a moment, if he had not feared driving Prussia to war. At the end of January, 1805, the affair was not in order, though Schimmelpenninck then submitted his plan to the emperor with a treaty. The emperor consented to the new regulation of government under a council pensionary to be chosen for five years, but demanded an advance of fifteen million francs to be repaid after four years. He threatened: "I confess to you frankly; I can take you whenever I wish, but I do not want to conquer you, free and independent you will remain, but you must be my allies and not England's." And further: "Go on your way, and if at last you cannot walk by yourselves, I will send you an officer to make you walk at my pleasure." With his proposals Schimmelpenninck in February returned to The Hague. The State Government laid no more obstacles in the way, but accepted the proposals from fear of worse. On March 22d the Legislative Body also accepted everything. The prescribed popular vote of all male inhabitants over twenty years old lasted from April 9th to 16th, but was only a ridiculous form. Of the 353,000 voters only 14,230 voted. On the 29th the magistrate named by State Government and Legislative Body for the post of council pensionary entered upon the government, left Amsterdam, and took up his residence at The Hague.

The republic's new government had a constitution more monarchical than republican, and according to general opinion was approved by Napoleon as a measure of transition to a real monarchy. At the head of the new constitution stood the solemnly proclaimed principles of liberty and equality with abolition of all rights by birth and feudal institutions, of all ecclesiastical precedence. The names of the "commonwealth's" departments were those of the old provinces. The sovereignty rested with



the Legislative Body, again entitled "High and Mighty Lords," and with the council pensionary. The Legislative Body of nineteen members, chosen for three years by the departmental governments, fixed estimates and taxes and deliberated on the laws offered by the council pensionary. Elected for five years by the Legislative Body, the council pensionary ruled with a council of state of five to nine members appointed by himself, and with five secretaries of state. The new constitution attempted to unite a powerful central authority with local and provincial autonomy and personal freedom. The council pensionary, living in the Oude Hof and the Huis Ten Bosch with a brilliant retinue, splendid furniture, and many liveried servants, acted in some respects like a real monarch; he set up a guard of fifteen hundred soldiers and never showed himself except with a large suite, just as his wife held princely receptions. Thus he meant to heighten the government's prestige, but the people did not give him warm sympathy, although Kantelaar, Feith, Kemper, De Bosch, and other poets sang his praise; there was more of a tendency to ridicule the princely airs of "His Excellency," the former patriotic advocate. Ending the prevailing uncertainty, improvement of the finances by simplicity and economy, adoption of a fixed political system—so ran his programme. Impartially he filled the offices with former patriots and partisans of the prince. In the same way the departmental and communal governments were composed of the best local elements. It was such a rule as the state had never had. Honest and able, talented in speaking and writing, acquainted with the opinions and institutions of his own country, with the attitudes of foreign countries, generally developed, clever, moderate, and intelligent, quick and industrious, full of zeal and devotion, Schimmelpenninck was the worthy head of such an administration. He was so regarded by Napoleon,

provided he took care that the "obligations of the Batavian republic as ally are fulfilled in all their extent and in all their points." The finances were a chief subject of regulation, and Schimmelpenninck, enlightened by Gogel, Van Stralen, and Canneman, sought measures to make up the annual deficit of forty millions. With extensive financial reforms Gogel aimed at an equitable distribution of taxation over the whole territory. For 1806 the estimates were forty-six and one-half millions of expenditures and revenue of forty-nine millions, so that with thirty millions of extraordinary war expenses the deficit was much reduced. No less important for the general condition of the people was the great reform in public school education. The council pensionary was active also in improving the government and the prosperity of the people. New laws were promulgated for organising the government; departmental and communal administrations were duly regulated; justice was placed on new bases; industry and agriculture were promoted by the construction of roads and canals; there was thought of concluding a concordat with the pope concerning the Roman Catholic church.

In the matter of commerce there were most serious difficulties. On taking office Schimmelpenninck had humbly begged for "the favourable regards" of the powerful emperor for his fatherland and had hoped for "the continuation of his confidence." Napoleon had expressed his desire that the most perfect trust might prevail in "the measures which they should judge adapted for their respective advantages and for maintaining the general tranquillity of Europe." What this signified became speedily evident. With England not the least commerce was to be carried on, no relations were to be kept up—the system favoured by the French republic and carried to the extreme by the empire. The Legislative Body issued a strict publication against all English



commerce and merchandise. No less zealously were the emperor's demands satisfied in military affairs. In spring the energetic admiral Verhuell again gathered the vessels required for an invasion of England. On the Flemish coast he was active in bringing the Batavian flotilla to Ambleteuse amid repeated conflicts with the English off Calais and Cape Gris-Nez, but without suffering important losses. At Boulogne one hundred and thirty-two thousand men were ready, from Brest and Texel French and Batavian squadrons of heavy ships were to come and support the "expeditionary armada," while a large French fleet under Villeneuve was to cover the passage over. But this long-expected fleet, watched by Nelson in the Channel, failed to appear, and the whole enterprise, for which Verhuell with his entire flotilla had arrived at Boulogne, was given up. The relation of France to Austria, Russia, and Prussia became very unfavourable and in August the third coalition war broke out, which again set Europe in fire and flame. The Batavian republic once more was to share the fate of France. In the plans of the Austrian emperor and Prussia Holland took an important place. In negotiations from that side the demand was made that Holland should recover its complete independence. But Napoleon would not hear to this. The troops from Boulogne were already turning to the Rhine. Marmont, who had collected twenty-four thousand French and Batavians in the camp of Zeist and later had embarked them at Texel, now moved to Mainz and without giving notice to the government took with him Dumonceau and nine thousand of the best Batavian soldiers. In the movement of troops it attracted attention that the French northern army was put under command of Prince Louis Bonaparte, "constable" of France, and intrusted with the defence of the Batavian republic, his headquarters being at Nijmegen. This was connected with the rumour that the

emperor wanted to place one of the imperial princes at the head of affairs here. Reports concerning Schimmelpenninck's growing weakness of sight in consequence of cataract gave rise to such suppositions, and after the glorious battle of Austerlitz (December 2d), which laid Austria at his feet, Napoleon finally grasped the bull by the horns. A note from Talleyrand, of January 6, 1806, suddenly informed Schimmelpenninck that the "institutions of Holland have been calculated for present needs," but that they now "must be calculated for a long future," for which the present form of government could not serve; the emperor therefore wished to receive Verhuell at Paris to talk with him about "a system which may assure forever independence and prosperity." Schimmelpenninck acted as if he did not feel the blow. After private consultation with the ministers he answered in the most friendly terms for the emperor's confidence and on February 16th sent Verhuell "on a secret mission" to Paris. Verhuell heard at Paris the emperor's purpose already guessed and received from his mouth the assurance that the commonwealth, whose fate with the existing constitution did not seem certain enough to the emperor, had only choice between annexation and transformation into a monarchy under an imperial prince, mention being made of prince Louis. Verhuell brought this message back to The Hague.

Deep was the impression, which the report made on the government of the country. The Legislative Body advised doing what was possible to look after the interest of the people and declared itself ready to deliberate with the council pensionary, the ministers, and the council of state. On April 10th a "Great Committee" from these persons and bodies met at the Huis Ten Bosch. It was resolved to send a deputation to Paris to dissuade the emperor from his plan or otherwise to obtain as conditions: independence, retention of the territory, of the



mother-tongue, of freedom of conscience, of the ancient civil laws and liberties, of free justice, government only by natives, inviolability of the national debt, no foreign troops, lightening of financial burdens, mutually favourable commercial regulations. The deputation was to make the emperor feel that the decision must finally rest with the Batavian people and was to return to The Hague, if these conditions were refused. The emperor vexed at the resistance offered would not even receive the commission, but let only Verhuell come to make plain that he would not give way, while Talleyrand let it be known that the Committee must immediately ask for Prince Louis as sovereign, and that in a new constitution the desired guarantees of independence and prosperity could be fixed; but that request must be made within a week, otherwise the emperor would adopt other "arrangements." The commission reported this threatening sentence to The Hague, whereupon the Great Committee met again on May 3d. It was resolved to yield to the demand, and the Parisian commission was to communicate this resolution and to declare its readiness to negotiate with the emperor or his representative concerning a "fundamental charter" to be submitted to the Great Committee and then to the approval of the nation. During a few weeks the commission deliberated with the emperor and Talleyrand over the new constitution, which was ready May 23d. The council pensionary, wishing to consult the people in any case, refused his coöperation in the meeting of the Great Committee to consider the proposed constitution on May 28th. The great majority regarded opposition as useless and dangerous. The council pensionary declined to sign the state treaty already signed by the commission in Paris, so this was done in the name of the Great Committee by the recorder of Their High Mightinesses and the secretary of the council of state. Schimmelpenninck's resistance went so far that

in a worthy letter he laid down his office on June 4th and left The Hague, informing the French ambassador that "without the sanction of the people" he did not feel at liberty to transfer the government to the new ruler. The president of Their High Mightinesses then assumed the government with the ministers. In a "sad comedy" the affair was settled at Paris on June 5th. Surrounded by his brilliant court, the emperor received the Dutch deputation, of which Verhuell was the spokesman. As concerted with Talleyrand, he said: "We beg Your Majesty to grant to us as supreme chief of our republic, as king of Holland, the prince Louis Napoleon, Your Majesty's brother, to whom we commit with entire and respectful confidence the preservation of our laws, the defence of our political rights, and all the interests of our dear fatherland." Napoleon answered graciously and recalled the magnanimity of France in not violating the conquered country's independence. The new sovereign was urged to "never cease to be French." Louis in official words expressed his willingness to accept the offered place, "since these peoples desire it and Your Majesty so commands." The weak prince allowed himself to be raised to his dignity just as by order of his brother he had married the latter's stepdaughter, Hortense de Beauharnais. He knew not what he was beginning. The Dutch deputation entreated him "to bind his fate" to that of the Batavian state, which otherwise might fall into other hands and just then by the death of the former hereditary stadtholder at Brunswick (April 9th) was freed from all ties to the house of Orange. So he departed on June 15th with wife and children by way of Brussels for his destination. On the 22d he arrived at The Hague among the people more curious than interested about him. Weary of hoping and fearing, the nation received its first monarch. Thus began the reign of the "king of Holland."





## CHAPTER XX

### THE KINGDOM OF HOLLAND

WITH the best of intentions Louis Bonaparte undertook the task imposed on him. Still young—celebrating on September 2d his twenty-eighth birthday—he had hitherto attracted little attention, living near his powerful brother and employed by Napoleon in subordinate military and civil posts. Desirous of a more important sphere of work, not insensible to the splendour of a royal court, inspired with the wish to be of use to his new subjects, weak in insight and inclined to follow sudden ideas, neither energetic nor independent in judgment, good-natured, kind, simple, and agreeable, but wavering before a stronger will than his own, and very suspicious, the new king had various qualities, which would not make his position easy. His weak health and unimpressive appearance worked unfavourably. Verhuell was sent ahead to Holland to arrange the new government according to the treaty made at Paris on May 24th and the constitutional laws accepted with it, which were converted into a formal constitution and ratified on August 7th. The seventy-nine articles of this constitution began by declaring “the government of Holland is monarchical, modified, and regulated by the constitution.” Equal rights with equal duties of all citizens, inviolability of the dwelling, imprisonment and sentence only according to law, protection for all religions, main-

tenance of existing laws, of the coinage, the public debt, the language, the unity of the kingdom were secured in the first articles. The crown was to be hereditary in the king's family. The council of state had to advise the king and to examine the proposed laws before they were submitted to the Legislative Body. In appointing ministers and councillors the king adhered to the system of conciliating the parties followed by the council pensionary. So the new government commenced, and the king's solemn declaration to Their High Mightinesses: "From the moment I set foot upon the soil of the kingdom, I became a Hollander," promised much. In the beginning the king seemed ready to rule in conformity with the ideas of Napoleon, but the views of both came immediately into conflict. Louis's first measures and plans were not to the emperor's taste. It was plain that the financial condition of the kingdom made necessary immediate provision, and the appointment of the able Gogel as minister of finances showed that the king was in earnest with his declaration that he wished to promote the happiness of the new state. The public debt required thirty-five millions for interest, against which the income of fifty millions from taxes cut a sorry figure, as only fifteen millions remained for government and war, while the costs of government amounted to twenty millions, and the war expenditures were estimated at nearly thirty millions. Gogel proposed a reduction of interest, but was successfully opposed by the councillor of state Goldberg, who emphasised the injustice of sacrificing the interests of the inhabitants to those of France, for whose benefit half of the debt had been incurred in eleven years. But uncommon economy was demanded in the administration. Economy did not agree with the habits of the king, who had little understanding for financial considerations and, desirous of surrounding himself with a brilliant court, was always thwarting the



good designs of his ministers. And economy in expenditures for army and navy did not correspond to the wishes of Napoleon or to the state of war with England, Sweden, Prussia, and Russia. Louis called back a large part of the fleet from Boulogne, wanted to reduce it to ten ships of the line, to discharge the German regiments, to bring the army to twenty thousand men and to demolish some forts; further he asked for the removal of the six French regiments maintained at the expense of his kingdom. These measures roused the emperor's anger. He scolded at the unwillingness and avarice of the Hollanders and reproached his brother for acting like a fool; he demanded a considerable fleet and at least thirty thousand troops for Holland. Speedily dissension arose between the two brothers, not the least on account of the king's plans to develop commerce with England in spite of the war. He proposed to strive for the restoration of peace on the sea so necessary to Holland and thus to make the kingdom again one of the first commercial powers. These ideas did not agree at all with Napoleon's plan, just then developed from the old commercial policy of the revolution into a system of a "continental blockade" for the purpose of reconquering the colonies by land according to his principle, "that whoever possesses the land will in the long run possess also the sea." Holland was to play an important part against England and to make the gigantic commercial struggle end in favour of France. The closing of French ports to English goods and vessels in 1803 was not properly maintained here, and the taxation of colonial wares had not yet had the desired result. In this contest England did not give way an inch; on November 11, 1806, it declared blockaded all ports from Brest to the Elbe—applying the English system of a "blockade on paper;" whereupon Napoleon answered with the famous decree, dated November 21st from conquered Berlin, prohibiting all intercourse with England and

asserting: "The British Isles are declared in a state of blockade."

War with the hitherto neutral Prussia and the introduction of the Continental System were disastrous for the finances of the young kingdom. Louis was compelled by the desires of his imperial brother to collect fifteen thousand men at Zeist. He was intrusted with the management of military matters for defending the French Rhine frontiers in the north and made his headquarters at Wesel with ten thousand French and Dutch troops, maintaining communications with the marshals Brune at Boulogne, Mortier at Mainz, and Kellermann farther away on the Rhine and having, if necessary, to push on to Münster or Cassel in the rear of the "grand army" operating against Prussia. After the battle of Jena (October 14th) he was ordered to move through Westphalia and East Friesland upon Münster and Paderborn and to occupy everything as far as over the Weser, especially Hanover, while he had to help conquer Hesse and bring to Wesel the rear of his army left at Zeist under Dumonceau. Louis obeyed these orders but saw himself placed in fact under Mortier, while his complaints were ridiculed by his brother and his warnings against an English invasion of Holland now stripped of troops were answered by reproaches at his innocent fear for "the pretended penury of the Dutch, who have all the money of Europe." Indeed whoever visited the bourse in Rotterdam and Amsterdam after two o'clock in the afternoon was struck by the crowd despite the long years of war. Evidently it was more a money business than trade in goods that caused this feverish activity. An English traveller relates that the greatest crowd on the Amsterdam exchange was around the representative of the firm of Hope—the leading banking house of Amsterdam. The emptiness of Amsterdam's streets, the many mercantile vessels lying idle there and in



Rotterdam showed that real commerce, the source of all prosperity in this country, had as good as disappeared. Napoleon noted the undeniable presence of capital and hoped to make it subserve his plans.<sup>1</sup> "A kingdom is well administered only when it is done with vigour and energy," Napoleon informed his brother, and he put him, the constable, under his marshal. This was too much for Louis. Under pretext of illness, he left to Mortier the command of Dumonceau's troops before Hameln in Hanover and returned discouraged in November to The Hague. No less trouble was caused by the Continental System, to which the king consented regretfully on account of the ruin of many that must follow in Holland. A deputation was to try to appease the emperor. New threats and reproaches ensued, and on December 15th it was stipulated for the whole kingdom that no ship should leave the ports without special permission; not even a fishing boat could go out or come in without being examined—all in the hope that Napoleon might approve of incorporating Westphalia with Holland as compensation for what the latter had lost in territory and colonies in and since 1795. The king's first speech from the throne did not sound very cheerful, although mention was made of the good service of the Dutch in "the grand army." The king ended with the significant declaration that he would do what he could "as long as we shall be at the post, where divine Providence has placed us." The innocent appointment of high officers and marshals of his kingdom, the institution of orders of chivalry aroused the emperor's wrath anew. He declared that in place of a good army people wanted to reduce the one existing and to count upon France for defence: "That is a pleasant idea: a state which wishes to be independent and does not wish to have an army. If

<sup>1</sup> Carr, *A tour through Holland* (1806), pp. 287, 289, 296. See Niebuhr's *Cirkularbrieve aus Holland* (1808), *passim*.

the Dutch have sold their colonies to the English, have let themselves be conquered by all the world, if they are without conscription, without energy, whose fault is it, if it is not theirs?" With the king's financial support a French newspaper, *Le vrai Hollandais*, was published to make Dutch affairs better known in France and elsewhere, but anti-French articles appeared in it. Napoleon demanded its suspension, and the king yielded. Even more angry was the autocrat, when he observed that, in spite of all decrees and promises, commerce with England was increasing. The king declared to his brother that he could not prevent trade through neutral territory and through America, that the embargo on English goods strictly enforced would ruin the country, and that smuggling prevailed on the French coast.

This situation was humiliating, and the king, surrounded by French officers, constantly spied upon by the ambassador, General Dupont-Chaumont, was not safe even in his own circle. He found no help in the queen, the fickle Hortense, who adored her brother-in-law and stepfather, and after the death of her eldest son she, not sympathising with the melancholy and sickly king, left the country to abide far from her sombre husband and his stiff court. Napoleon busied himself also with these domestic matters and exhorted his brother to treat better "the best and most virtuous of wives." The unfortunate monarch was not yet willing to give up his task and defended his governmental measures and his domestic life as well as he could. In the midst of this correspondence measures were continued in the spring of 1807 for organising the new kingdom. At the head of a department was a governor with a department council; at the head of the "quarters" of each department was a bailiff; the communes of the first class (over five thousand inhabitants) were headed by burgomasters with magistrates and town councils, all chosen by the sovereign; the com-



munes of the second class remained as rural communities under their old government. The king turned his attention to raising up the weakened national Dutch spirit. Sometimes amusing himself with literary work, he had this particularly in mind and hoped by aiding scholars and poets to call forth a new national literature. For this purpose he thought of using Bilderdijk, who had returned from Germany; he made him his librarian and his teacher of Dutch, gave him a pension, and showed him all kinds of favours, as to the noted poet, the "glory of his kingdom," who was winning a great name not only by a rapid succession of miscellaneous poems but also by his *Sickness of the Learned*, his *Fingal*, his *Floris V.* in epic and dramatic literature. Older poets like Feith and Le Francq van Berkhey saw themselves replaced by younger men recognising Bilderdijk as their master. Helmers and Loots, De Bosch, Tollens, and Van Hall followed his example. Moralists as Paulus van Hemert and De Wacker van Zon trod the path of the earlier Spectators; Adriaan Loosjes wrote his old Dutch romance *Maurits Lijnslager*; the De Vries brothers, Meindert and H. W. Tydeman, Kinker, and others showed their power in literary criticism. For the promotion of literature, art, and science the king, in imitation of the Institute of France, founded on May 4, 1808, the Royal Netherlandish Institute. Plans were prepared for improving higher education. Circumstances did not favour this revival. The basis of nationality, a strong and independent state could not be said to be present; at the beck of the mighty ruler of France the whole state could be swept away. Little came of the desired extension of the kingdom. Louis might organise Westphalia, Napoleon undid this organisation at once; he forbade the annexation of Oldenburg, and in the negotiations Holland's claims did not win much. The defeats of Prussia and Russia in February at Eylau, in June at Friedland,

where the Dutch troops fought valiantly, had led on July 7th to the peace of Tilsit, in which Prussia ceded East Friesland and Russia Jever. In the treaty of Fontainebleau concluded on November 11th these lands were united with Holland besides others. Holland had to pay for the increase of territory by the complete cession of Flushing, long treated by Napoleon as a French possession on account of its importance for the defence of the Scheldt. To the king's great disappointment there was no mention of Westphalia or Cleves, the former destined for the new kingdom of Jerome Bonaparte, the latter for Murat's grand duchy of Berg. The humiliation of Prussia removed the sole obstacle to the plans for annexing Holland. With the peace of Tilsit the necessity of reckoning with Prussia disappeared. Napoleon could now aim at annexation. "Prussia no longer exists and I am freed from all those bonds," wrote the emperor later. At the end of May Louis had followed his wife to Pau, after asking the emperor's permission, leaving marshal Brune at the head of the army and his ministers as regents. His absence gave rise to violent dissensions between the imperial government and that of The Hague respecting measures against England, the treatment of French soldiers, etc. The French ambassador threatened French occupation, even annexation. Louis returned in September by way of Paris and protested earnestly. So violent became the tone of Napoleon's letters, that Louis offered (October 9th) to resign his office.

But the emperor did not yet want this; he did not answer the offer and continued his demands. The king's plan for economy to reduce the army from fifty thousand to thirty thousand men brought his brother again to an expression of displeasure. The king entreated his brother to help him and not to ruin him with the country; he declared he would suffer with the nation, but would not leave it in its misfortune. Napoleon replied by asking



for an army of at least forty thousand men needed for Holland, and by calling for the introduction of the Code Napoleon. Well might Louis in his address of November 28th from the throne speak of the arduous labours laid upon him. In his short sojourn Louis had really won the love and confidence of many. His benevolence, appearing in the Leyden disaster of January, when the explosion of a powder ship destroyed an entire quarter, and in the flood of 1809 in the Rhine and Meuse region, his zeal in learning the Dutch language, his interest in national art, letters, and traditions had gained many hearts. Nobles and patricians rivalled one another in readiness to serve him and crowded the new court. The Continental System brought new difficulties, after a threatening French note had made the king in the council of ministers burst out angrily against his brother's tyranny. The emperor's will, however, was law, and new measures had to be taken to prevent absolutely trade with England or to guard against it more strictly. The government did what it could, and Napoleon showed himself satisfied for a time. After the renewal of the war between France and Sweden (July), the French consul-general at Amsterdam watching the Swedish trade as well as the American ships, which visited Dutch ports in increasing numbers, commerce was generally restricted to that on the Weser still possible with certificates of origin, or Dutch capital was secretly invested in English commercial ventures. Finally Holland was compelled to declare war again on Sweden. England defended itself vigorously. It sought to remain on good terms with America by giving up its right of searching neutral vessels, but on November 11, 1807, declared all ports and places of France and its allies blockaded, prohibiting all commerce with them and proclaiming as prizes all ships coming from them. A few days later the importation of all French merchandise into England was positively for-

bidden. Napoleon answered with the Milan decree of December 17, 1807, by which the blockade of the British Isles by sea and land was once more proclaimed. It seemed as if Napoleon was right in asserting that "Holland would not emerge from its ruins," and something like a beginning of annexation was the emperor's offer (March 27th) to transfer Louis as king to Spain, which kingdom early in 1808 became a branch of the French empire. Louis declined the offer, affirming that he was no governor of a province to be moved at will, but the sovereign of a free country. He declared himself ready to respect the will of his brother. In a melancholy letter of January 21, 1808, he entreated the latter to treat him better. Without giving attention to Louis's representations concerning the financial situation the emperor demanded of his brother enlargement of the navy and its complete equipment for six months on account of a threatened English invasion. Reluctantly the Dutch government resorted to a new domestic loan. Before long four squadrons were collected. The minister Gogel hoped to establish a good system of taxation, in which the burdens were brought from the poor upon the rich man, who had spared himself as much as possible under the old republic, but he did not find support enough from the king for his plans of economy and reform. In the course of 1808 the relation became no better between the king and his able but obstinate minister of finance. Gogel wanted a free hand, but Louis, undesirous of too independent servants, would not give it, and demanded obedience. Furthermore Gogel had remained a member of an Amsterdam commercial house. This led to difficulties, and in April, 1809, the king requested this connection should be given up. Gogel refused, and his resignation was accepted in friendly terms. He continued to be a member of the council of state, and his successor was his old friend Appelius, who was to attempt to solve the



“enigma” of the Dutch finances—a seemingly hopeless task.

The relations between the king and his brother became no pleasanter in 1808. After a short stay in Utrecht Louis (April 20th) chose Amsterdam for his residence, as people thought, to punish the nobility of The Hague for their enmity, but, as he asserted, because Amsterdam was the actual capital. He made his entrance into the palace on the Dam, the old seat of the city government; he came alone, because Hortense at Paris was just giving birth to the prince, who was later to become Napoleon III. The appointment (April, 1808) of the duke de la Rochefoucauld as ambassador, a man of old and high nobility, related to Hortense by marriage, appeared like a mark of amity between the brothers. But the new ambassador had the same commission as his predecessor to watch against smuggling, regarding which Napoleon was so well informed that he could furnish the king with a list of smuggling firms. The embassy was a centre of personal intrigues against the king; the ambassador did not spare Louis observations on his weak and costly government. The year 1808 passed without any improvement in the condition of commerce and trade. Increasing discontent at Amsterdam and elsewhere produced riots among the impoverished working people. The smuggling of colonial wares by means of false papers and abuse of the neutral flag continued; in Zeeland especially the execution of the decrees made trouble, the more so as England tried every means to break the general blockade, now trading freely with Sweden only, since America and the maritime nations of Europe had obeyed Napoleon's urgency. Strong measures could not kill smuggling in a country situated like Holland. “How can the skin be prevented from perspiring?” said Louis in despair. Amid difficulties the work of organising the kingdom went on. A criminal and a civil code, based

upon modern principles, were drawn up in 1808; they comprised mostly the French law but somewhat modified in accordance with Dutch customs. In the spring of 1809 followed the introduction of the French metrical system with Dutch names, the establishment of a court of accounts, the regulation of the constitutional nobility, composed of the old nobility and that created by royal patent. The government kept watch of what was left of the colonies. The squadrons in the Indies were not in a condition to defend Java. A French squadron under command of Linois did not bring the relief necessary against the ever developing English sea power. The enemy was soon master in the seas of the Indian archipelago, captured merchantmen, conquered the remote posts, and in October, 1806, ventured an attack upon the harbour of Batavia, where he first destroyed a few ships and afterwards, returning with a considerable squadron under Pellew, later Lord Exmouth, burned nearly all the unrigged fleet lying there, while the last ships left were taken by the same admiral in December, 1807, at Grisseh. King Louis was informed of the situation by the able Nederburgh and G. K. van Hogendorp and became convinced that first of all the defence must be considered of the remaining possessions, particularly of Java. He turned to the energetic Daendels, who had shown uncommon talent for governing in Westphalia and East Friesland, and on January 28, 1807, appointed him governor-general. Daendels went by way of Paris and Lisbon to the Canary Islands, from where on a small ship with a French captain he fortunately escaped the English and arrived at Anjer on January 1, 1808. It was a question whether Daendels, who had come without troops and ships, would be able to withstand circumstances and to bring the colony to the ardently desired peace. He found Java relatively in a flourishing condition owing to the increasing cultivation of coffee over



the entire island and to the commerce from and to neutral America. Under him the Javanese were terribly oppressed, and their chiefs were estranged by injudicious harshness. Vigorous work was done in improving the defences, organising the troops, building a fleet of small coasting vessels, manufacturing weapons, constructing forts and barracks, making military highways—all accomplished with great sacrifices of money and human life, both of subordinate importance to the hardened soldier, while he showed little insight into commercial matters. With anxiety the time was awaited when England should seriously attack the colony, and there was apprehension in the motherland also over the way in which Daendels went to work.

In February came the first reports of an approaching war between France and Austria. Napoleon gave warning of an English invasion, against which Holland must alone defend itself. Now that twelve thousand Dutch troops were in Germany and three thousand in Spain, Louis had here scarcely three thousand men, his guard. In April hostilities commenced on the Inn, and Louis took measures to prepare Zealand and Brabant and to put the navy in order. In the summer the rising in Germany was put down, and the battle of Wagram (July 5th and 6th) ended the war on land, as Austria was forced to a disadvantageous peace. A force of one hundred and sixty war-ships and fifteen hundred vessels for transporting thirty-eight thousand men was made ready in England under command of the young Pitt's older brother, Lord Chatham. English troops were landed on Walcheren, advanced on South Beveland, defeated the Dutch garrisons, which resisted at Bath under general Bruce, but retreated speedily to Brabant. Bruce was deposed from office for neglect of duty. By the end of August Louis gathered a force of almost thirty thousand men stationed in the Brabant fortresses. Napoleon ridi-

culed his brother's measures and appointed as commander of the northern army marshal Bernadotte, under whom Dumonceau was to lead the Dutch troops. After a bombardment of two days with eleven hundred cannon the English captured Flushing on August 15th, but the progress of negotiations at Schönbrunn made them lose courage, and they began to evacuate the occupied territory. In the middle of September they gave up Walcheren and embarked their troops, some garrisons remaining until December 26th and destroying the fortifications and docks of Flushing before departing. Napoleon declared that "Holland has never been less useful than since it was a kingdom." Early in October he put the trusted marshal Bessières in place of the intriguing Bernadotte and commissioned him to do what seemed to him necessary in Zeeland and Brabant and to remember that the Hollanders were under his command. From the English invasion Napoleon had learned the importance of Antwerp, "the secret of the Scheldt," and he ordered it to be made a fortress and arsenal of the first rank.

On November 22d Napoleon through the ambassador Verhuell at Amsterdam proposed that Louis should come to deliberate with him. The king, though fearing for his personal safety at Paris, decided to go. He transferred the government temporarily to the council of ministers, took leave of the Legislative Body on the 26th, and left for Paris with Roëll, the minister of foreign affairs. The king had hoped to return before January 1st, but it was impossible; Napoleon held his brother virtually as a prisoner. The emperor's anger was great, and he called Holland "an English colony," which he would "devour." Soon the emperor acknowledged that he wanted annexation, by force if necessary, should Louis not voluntarily abdicate. Hoping to appease his brother by concessions, the king offered to cede territory as far as the Meuse. Napoleon proposed that some thirty Dutch notables



should come to Paris. In a letter of December 21st he demanded cession of everything as far as the Rhine. The king asserting his desire to return to Holland with his oldest son, the emperor replied that he put them both under police surveillance and would prevent their departure. New negotiations followed with the duke of Cadore, minister of foreign affairs, the king offering Brabant and Zealand for an indemnity in German territory, but the answer was a refusal of all indemnity and a threat that French troops might invade the kingdom without warning in case the affair was not speedily concluded. With suspense people waited in Holland for what was to happen. The crisis approached rapidly. The nonpayment of salaries and postponement of interest disbursements caused a general panic. The sending by Napoleon of marshal Oudinot, duke of Reggio, to Antwerp as commander of the northern army seemed a measure for the incorporation of Holland, because the emperor desired for his empire the Rhine frontier, the "natural frontier" of France, of old the aim of French political ideals. Louis resolved to depart even against the emperor's will. A violent scene ensued between the two brothers, and Louis had to remain under guard. He consented to the cession of territory up to the Rhine and Waal, to the adoption of all the measures concerning the Continental System desired by the emperor. This plan was laid before a "Great Council" at Amsterdam, which submitted in discouragement. But Napoleon in Paris was making new demands upon his brother and more negotiation was necessary, so that the king lamented: "We are here in a den of cutthroats, from which we must get out at any price; when once I am out of it, I will not be caught a second time." At last Napoleon made his ultimatum known to the king, who had to yield the same day: "This farce must finish." Thus came about the Paris treaty of March 16th. A letter

announcing the king's intention to give way reached Amsterdam in the night of February 27th to 28th and put an end to all ideas of defending the capital. By this treaty all commerce with England was prohibited until the revocation of the English orders of 1807; imperial licenses alone should authorise the carrying on of commerce; eighteen thousand men, including six thousand Frenchmen, were to watch the mouths of the river with the French customs officers, all supported by Holland; the last frontier proposed, the "valley of the Rhine," was to separate the two realms. Napoleon's marriage to Maria Louisa of Austria detained the king several days longer in France. After the ratification of the treaty he left Paris on April 7th and four days later arrived in his capital. He was received with joy, as people either knew or suspected to what grievous treatment he had been exposed for the sake of independence.

The joy did not last long. Only three months more of life were granted to the kingdom. A meeting of high officials on April 13th recommended the calling of a "provisional commission." This commission met on April 17th and received secret instructions, in which the king appealed to its members to tell him whether this "wretched existence" should be continued and, if so, to seek with him the means for carrying out the treaty. Louis was as good as deposed from military authority and remained little more than administrative governor of some departments of France. The emperor impressed this upon him. He visited the incorporated districts in May, and the unfortunate king was compelled to do homage to him at Antwerp. But La Rochefoucauld appeared there also and was received with greater cordiality and honour than Louis himself. The ambassador informed the king that in a week he would give over his post to his secretary Sérurier. To this sudden departure, though it had been decided upon earlier, some



ground was given by a complaint about a fight, in which a coachman of the embassy was insulted. After a stormy audience with the king the ambassador left Amsterdam on May 29th, while Napoleon declared he would only have a *chargé d'affaires* there and wanted no Dutch ambassador at Paris, sending away Verhuell. The end was approaching. Louis undertook to prevent the occupation of Amsterdam at any price, but Krayenhoff's plans for defending it found no support from the ministers and generals. At the end of June the report came to Sérurier that the emperor had determined to occupy Amsterdam; only a brilliant reception of the troops could accomplish something for Holland, Cadore believed. The king was resolved not to endure this and to abdicate on the "triumphal entry" of Oudinot. He had long been tired of the game of cat and mouse. On July 1st Louis laid down the government in favour of his oldest son and, in default of him, of the youngest son under the regency of the queen, in expectation of whose coming the ministers were to undertake the regency as Provisional Council of Regency. In the night of July 2d to 3d the king left Haarlem and went to Teplitz in Bohemia, putting himself under the protection of Austria, sorrowing over the failure of his good intentions, but hoping for the rescue of a nation, to which he had desired to devote his life. Never in later life did he rightly account for the reason of his failure. Knowing his brother's aims, he should have considered in assuming office that these aims, directed to the interests of France and against England and Germany, were not consistent with the illusions he cherished of an independent kingship over a free commercial people. As men do, he attributed the blame of what had happened to the tyranny of the powerful emperor.

The ministers began their government on July 3d by calling together the Legislative Body. They offered the young king their congratulations. The following day

Oudinot entered Amsterdam, solemnly received by the minister of war, who could not restrain his tears, and conducted to his dwelling by the municipal government amid the roar of cannon and the roll of drums. He assumed the management of affairs and assigned a French guard of honour to the young Napoleon Louis. General Janssens, sent with the report of the abdication of king Louis to the emperor, found him in an angry state of mind over his brother's action and accusing the king of the blackest ingratitude towards his benefactor. To the emperor no other solution was now possible but annexation, even in the interest of Holland. Thus he spoke, suppressing the fact that this solution had been prepared by him. Dated July 9, 1810, the decree of Rambouillet in article 1 of its thirteen articles said: "Holland is reunited to the empire." Amsterdam was to be the third city of the empire; the kingdom was to have six senators, six councillors of state, twenty-five deputies in the Legislative Body; Lebrun, duke of Plaisance, formerly consul with the emperor, was as lieutenant-general with a council of ministers to be settled at Amsterdam until January, 1811, when the real French government would begin; in July fifteen persons appointed by the Legislative Body must come as a commission to Paris to regulate debts and union with the empire. The emperor wanted a proclamation to be issued, summarising the benefits of annexation after the "temporary governments, which for sixteen years have troubled this part of the empire"; the ample field for Holland's activity, "from Amsterdam to Rome," would enable the population to wait for the opening of commerce, "which immortalised your forefathers and held so high the honour of the Batavian and Dutch name." With this salute to the glorious past the Dutch nation disappeared on July 13, 1810 from the list of peoples. The following morning Lebrun arrived in Amsterdam and assumed the government of the country.





## CHAPTER XXI

### YEARS OF ANNEXATION TO FRANCE

SO the affair was settled and the territory actually conquered in January, 1795, was attached to France. Many upright patriots, though lamenting with the poet Helmers that "the people's crown of honour lies in the dust, the land's fame has ceased to shine," had considered no other outcome as desirable. Great sacrifices would have to be made for military matters, but they might soon diminish, it was hoped, now the mighty empire of the west, under the greatest military genius of modern times, was to force a world's peace from stubborn but almost exhausted England, which saw a new enemy, a powerful commercial rival, rise up in the United States of America. Many were captivated by the magic of the personality of Napoleon "the Great," who had astonished the world during fourteen years with his victories and had established government and law on new foundations like Charlemagne a thousand years before. A new empire of the Franks seemed to be born at the word of the "Phenix, which after a thousand years springs up from great Charles's holy ashes," whose mouth, according to Bilderdijk's poem, shook the thrones of the earth. In the first place the new French territory had to be organised, and a commission was to give advice at Paris. This "Council for the affairs of Holland," appointed on July 22d, consisted finally of thirty members. Its meetings were ended by an imperial notice of October 18th.

To the head of the government came as lieutenant-general Charles François Lebrun, duke of Plaisance, a kind and cultivated man, who had served his country as a financier before he became consul under Bonaparte. He deserved better than Van der Palm's reproach that he "could hear everybody and help nobody" and "willingly would have done all the good that did not stand in his power." Napoleon wanted to govern the country himself, and the governor's task was "to see everything, get information, tell me all, receive directly my orders to have them executed." Though seventy-two years old, Lebrun did his best to prepare for the transfer of the government to the prefects, who were to replace him as actual governors after December 31st, while he would then have the supervision as governor-general. With moderation and tact the imperial government went to work, as appeared from the great decree of October 18th at Fontainebleau organising the new departments.

Of great importance was the matter of the colonies or rather of Java, where Daendels had caused general dissatisfaction by his vigorous but arbitrary rule. The English saw with pleasure that the natives "are disgusted with the Dutch in Java." Napoleon had received unfavourable reports concerning Daendels. His actions were investigated at Paris, and on November 24, 1810, it was resolved to dismiss him, Janssens being appointed his successor. Janssens arrived in Java on April 27th, and Daendels gave up the government to him without opposition. The new governor-general had brought five hundred men under general Jumel, the commander appointed by Napoleon, a reënforcement quite insufficient to help defend the island against the daily expected English expedition. After the Moluccas and other possessions were captured, a considerable fleet of thirty-two ships, sixty gunboats, and twelve thousand men, under command of general Auchmuty and accompanied by the



English governor of India, Lord Minto himself, sailed slowly towards Java and arrived there at the end of July. Landing near Batavia on August 4th, Auchmuty occupied the undefended capital, defeated the army of Janssens and Jumel at Weltevreden, and appeared before the camp of Meester Cornelis, which was exposed on the 26th to a sharp attack and with many killed and captured had to be evacuated. Auchmuty followed some of the troops to Samarang and pursued the governor-general, who on September 17th after a desperate resistance was obliged to capitulate at Salatiga and to surrender the island and its dependencies. Thus the last of the Dutch colonies fell into English hands.

Soon came the report that the emperor himself with his new consort was to visit the annexed departments. He believed that his visit would have a conciliatory effect and would remove the last traces of ill will, which seemed desirable on account of his purpose to bring Russia to reason by a great war, in which case an attack of England upon the coast might be considered possible. The journey began on September 19, 1811, at Compiègne. The emperor went to Flushing and spent a few days inspecting the fleet on the Scheldt. After visiting Middelburg and Veere he greeted the empress at Antwerp, sent her on to Gorkum, and himself sailed to Willemstadt, from where he was rowed on October 4th to Hellevoetsluis. Then he came on a yacht to Dordrecht, received everywhere with acclamation and honours, so that in a contented frame of mind he met his wife at Gorkum. In the humblest terms, partly brought out by the commands of the prefects to spare no mark of respect, the magistrates came from place to place to wait upon the ruler, ever testifying in almost servile words to their delight at his visit and their veneration for his person. It is not surprising that Napoleon, seeing everything in roseate colours, wrote to his stepson, Eugène de Beauharnais:

"I have been extremely pleased with Holland; the people have kept the memory of their independence only to feel the advantages of the reunion and to find in it uniformity of laws, a moderate system of taxation, and a regular progress of affairs. They are more French than any inhabitants of the reunited countries." The imperial couple went in triumph to Utrecht, where people showed their devotion to the emperor by kissing his coat and his horse as of a saint. On October 9th it was the turn of Amsterdam, at first indifferent to the high honour, but on his arrival exhausting itself in testimonials of respect and submission, by official command lavishly decorated with green branches and arches, excelling in boastful memorials in Dutch, French, and Latin in honour of the "new Mars" on the white horse, the "modern Jupiter," the restorer of the "golden age of Saturn." Here also were guards of honour, enthusiastic speeches, salutes of cannon, ringing of bells, illuminations, fireworks, thundering applause. The emperor visited North Holland and Helder, returning by way of Alkmaar and Haarlem. On October 24th Napoleon left the capital, and visited Haarlem and Leyden. Next came The Hague, by official command beautifully decorated but in its desertion not inclined to enthusiasm. By way of Delft and Rotterdam the journey was continued through Gouda, Oudewater, Utrecht, and Amersfoort to Loo, Zwolle, Deventer, and Nimwegen, the emperor and empress reaching Saint-Cloud again on November 11th. The triumphal progress of the sovereign had humiliated the feelings of many, but the greater part of the population had been carried away by the brilliant figure of the glorious emperor in the midst of his generals and courtiers, the "hero of the universe," who inspired Bilderdijk to lofty verses of praise. Arrived at the summit of power, Napoleon's world empire did not make the impression of being permanently established, because England was still in arms,



Russia had to be feared, the rising in Spain still continued, and in France itself traces of growing discontent appeared with the heavy burdens of constant war, which exhausted the strength of land and people. The birth of the heir to the imperial dignity, the young king of Rome, on March 19, 1811, seemed, however, to have fixed Napoleon's dominion. In this country also dissatisfaction increased among all classes of the population, now that the pressure was more felt of conscription and reduction of interest on the public debt to one-third, of police surveillance and customs duties, of excessive taxation while commerce and communication stood still, of the unwonted grip of a vigorous administration, of the unfavourable condition of the land's finances. The picture presented by the Dutch departments in 1812 is one of decline and fall, of misery in every branch of the life of the people. In the cities great numbers of houses are torn down, the population decreases, aristocratic families reduce their servants and leave their spacious mansions to dwell in side streets; in the country estates diminish and lie neglected for want of funds. The Dutch language, the vehicle of the national feeling, is treated like a dialect doomed to death, which is gradually giving place to the invading French. Literature, though represented by such talented men as Bilderdijk, Van der Palm, Helmers, Loots, Simons, the young Tollens, cannot bloom freely under the strict censorship; the theatre lives by the performance of popular pieces and translations; art is limited to landscape and portrait painting in a modest way. The new government was inspired with the best intentions, but did not make sufficient allowance for the manners and customs of the newly annexed people, for the peculiar needs of the country. The sovereign himself, accustomed to sacrifice everything to the demands of his far-reaching plans, threw to the winds the warnings and complaints of Lebrun and constantly

wanted more from the gradually exhausted populations, which groaned under the heavy yoke and longed for deliverance.

The year 1812 is one of gloom among the unfortunate years succeeding one another from 1795. But it saw the enterprise begin that was to ruin Napoleon's empire—the expedition to Russia. The help of that country alone could be decisive in the contest still waged by England against the conqueror. After the peace of Tilsit in 1807 the alliance between Napoleon and Alexander seemed based upon personal friendship; the meeting of the monarchs at Erfurt in 1808 had been the highest point of that alliance. But in the last Austrian war the czar of Russia had shown some coolness. Alexander refused Napoleon's request for the hand of his sister, but beheld with anger his Austrian marriage from fear of the increase of Austria's influence on the Balkan peninsula; he saw with uneasiness Sweden and Turkey come more under French influence and all central and southern Europe become either French territory or a French protectorate. War threatened to break out in 1811. Negotiations prolonged the peace, but in April, 1812, Alexander presented at Paris an unacceptable ultimatum. In May Napoleon left Paris to go to the east at the head of the greatest army that Europe had seen for centuries, in all nearly seven hundred thousand men, of whom four hundred and twenty thousand men were destined under the personal command of the emperor to penetrate to the heart of Russia, which was waiting for him with not two hundred and seventy thousand men. The Dutch departments also had to furnish their share in the gigantic force brought together for the emperor's grand undertaking. At fifteen thousand men the number is estimated of the Dutch troops in the army operating in Russia. The Dutch divisions and officers had their full part in the glory as well as in the horrors of the famous cam-



paign. On June 23d began with the crossing of the Niemen "the second war of Poland," as Napoleon said, and a month later commenced the misery in the plains of Lithuania purposely laid waste by the retreating Russians, nearly a third of the army melting away. Under the walls of Smolensk the first great battle took place; on the Moskva the second and more important battle (September 7th), where the thirty thousand killed and sixty thousand wounded on the French side were too high a price for the victory. Napoleon reached Moscow on September 14th. The terrible conflagration and the ensuing pillage of the Russian capital made that success useless. Over a month the emperor remained in Moscow, hesitating whether to retreat before the nation in arms for "holy Russia," to stay there during the winter, or to advance upon St. Petersburg. The horrible Russian winter was rapidly approaching. Finally he resolved—too late—upon retreat and began it October 19th. That disastrous march ended amid frightful suffering. The army, assailed by countless Russians and disorganised by cold and hunger, came back to Smolensk on November 12th scarcely thirty-four thousand men strong. With lion's courage it fought its way through the Russian hosts, joining at last the corps left behind. On the half-frozen Berezina (November 28th) a desperate battle was fought to make possible the passage over the bridges built by the Dutch pontoon engineers. In December the army, hardly eighteen thousand men, arrived again at the Niemen. The number of the dead is put at 250,000, of the captured at 130,000, of the deserters at 50,000 men, gigantic losses that robbed the empire of its best soldiers. The Dutch troops suffered not least. A few hundred men only of the fifteen thousand came back; most were killed or died of privation, others fell into the enemy's hands and experienced the hardships of captivity.

Aversion to military service was increased by the terri-

ble tales told of what had occurred in Russia. There was no well-organised general revolt. So the commander in these departments, general Molitor, was able to restore order with his slight means. In the spring the emperor had succeeded in gathering a considerable force to replace the destroyed "grand army of Russia," forming an army of half a million. This was the last harvest of lives. The exhaustion of the empire became so great that in some parts of France farming was carried on by women and children only and the want of males was everywhere felt. With this last army the emperor was to meet the allies, risking all upon the last card. The Napoleon of 1813 was no longer that of 1796 or 1805. His physical and mental powers had not stood the hard work of years with impunity; a serious disease of the stomach troubled him, and he often fell into a state of dullness and drowsiness. The proud monarch was not of a mind to give up even a portion of his oppressive rule. If he had been willing, in the spring of 1813 Austria and Prussia would probably have consented to some arrangement to support him, while exhausted Russia hesitated to cross the Vistula, and England began to foresee the end of its strength, being at war with the American republic and relying on the able general Wellington to carry out Pitt's policy. But the emperor, trusting to his star, let the chance go by; he was determined to play his great game to the end. The popular movement in Prussia, roused by French tyranny, inspired by the fiery songs of Arndt and Körner, by the patriotic admonitions of Humboldt and Fichte, strengthened by the reforms of Stein and Hardenberg, by the military organisation of Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, forced the wavering Prussian king to side with Russia, his army under Blücher burning to wipe out the national shame. At Breslau on March 19th the king allied himself with the emperor Alexander and by an "appeal to his people"



exhorted the Prussian nation to throw off the yoke. Before the end of the month Hamburg fell into the hands of the Russians, Dresden to the Prussians. Napoleon now appeared at the head of his troops in Thuringia, opposing two hundred thousand men against the somewhat stronger force of Russians and Prussians. Austria still hesitated, although by the secret intrigues of the crafty Metternich it urged the German princes and Denmark to quit the French colours. At Lützen in May Napoleon defeated the allies under Wittgenstein and Blücher, at Bautzen he forced them to retreat behind the Oder, reconquered Saxony and half of Silesia, while Davoust recaptured Hamburg and Lübeck and Jerome Bonaparte returned to his revolted kingdom of Westphalia. Austria proposed an armistice. Napoleon consented and in June and July there were negotiations at Dresden. Meanwhile Prussia restored its losses, Bernadotte, hoping to fish in troubled waters, disembarked Swedish troops in Stralsund, a Russian corps under Bennigsen hastened from Poland, England sent over millions more of subsidies. Austria also organised its army, for it was certain that Napoleon would not accept Metternich's proposal—the Rhine for the French frontier, release of Germany, giving up of Spain and half of Italy. Though the armistice was prolonged until August 10th and a new peace congress met at Prague, it was soon evident that no peace would come. Finally Metternich, deeming Napoleon lost, threw off the mask, and Austria joined the allies. The second campaign of 1813 found three great armies opposed to Napoleon: the Russian-Swedish-Prussian northern army under Bernadotte, the Silesian under Blücher, the Bohemian under Schwartzberg, besides 240,000 men in northern Germany, 80,000 Austrians in Italy, 200,000 English and Spaniards under Wellington around the Pyrenees, together a million soldiers, against them Napoleon having somewhat over half a million, 300,000 in

Saxony under his immediate command. He defeated the Austrians near Dresden (August 26th), but marshal Vandamme had to capitulate at Kulm in Bohemia, marshal Macdonald was beaten by Blücher on the Katzbach in Silesia, marshal Oudinot at Grossbeeren on the way to Berlin, marshal Davoust in Mecklenburg, marshal Ney at Dennewitz, all contending with the unwillingness of their soldiers. The three coalition armies in September united, and the "battle of nations" at Leipzig (October 16th-18th) decided, after a hard fight against a crushing superiority, the defeat of the French, followed by a retreat in panic. Only forty thousand men of the imperial army reached the Rhine at Mainz.

This was the moment waited for abroad by the prince of Orange and at home by some brave patriots. Orange in London took new courage, though he could not dissemble that the English government favoured him little and was more inclined to act on behalf of his son, prince William, who served in Spain under Wellington and was destined to marry the young princess Charlotte, heiress presumptive of the English crown. After the battle of Leipzig the desired subsidy was promised him by England, and he took measures to gather troops in Germany. From the Prussian side attention was fixed on Holland, and the strategic leaders of the Prussian armies considered the possibility of conquering this land by a rapid advance of Blücher's Silesian force, compelling the French to evacuate Holland, if the people revolted and an English fleet appeared on the coast. But the Prussians feared that the unreliable Bernadotte with divisions of the northern army would make himself master of the country. The Prussian general Bülow, really under Bernadotte's command, was afraid of this and resolved in November to move up from Münster with the twenty-five thousand men at his disposal. His advanced posts on the 17th were on the Dutch frontier.



He issued a proclamation to the Hollanders calling for their coöperation, and on November 23d his vanguard crossed the border at Doetinchem. It was found that Cossacks of the northern army had already passed the frontier and been received with joy by the population. Bülow was invited to move forwards. In all these plans dependence was placed on a rising of the Dutch people. It did not have to be waited for, thanks to the initiative of Gijsbert Karel van Hogendorp and his friends. At first Uhland's summons to arms: "Forward, Holland, Netherland! Up with the sword in free hands," found no echo. Then came the report of the battle of Leipzig, and a shock went through the minds of all. Had the time arrived? The evacuation of Amsterdam by the garrison, which Lebrun sent with Molitor to Utrecht on November 14th, was the signal for the outbreak of a popular revolt. The enterprising Amsterdam sea captain Job May, who had consulted with Hogendorp and his friends at The Hague, came back to Amsterdam on the morning of the 15th and stirred up the turbulent populace. Some customs houses were soon in flames amid the singing of patriotic songs and shouts of *Oranje Boven*. Lebrun gave way, put the government in the hands of the municipality, and betook himself on the 16th to Utrecht. Next day the governor-general transferred his authority to Molitor and departed for France. There was danger that the Dutch departments, if given up by the French, might be conquered by the allies, upon whom their fate would thenceforth depend. Van Hogendorp saw this plainly and resolved to act. Early on the 17th reports of the movement in Amsterdam reached The Hague. Van Stirum went with them to the house of Van Hogendorp and received from him a proclamation already made. With this proclamation in his pocket and the orange cockade on his hat Van Stirum walked into the street, had the document read before the city hall, and at the

head of the national guard marched with drum beating and colours flying through The Hague. There was some hesitation. Van Hogendorp could get no States-General together; the old regents were afraid and would appoint no provisional government in the prince's name. The undismayed leader drew up a new proclamation, that of the evening of November 20th, declaring that he and Van der Duyn took charge of the general government until the arrival of His Highness, entreating all brave Netherlanders to support them, and ending with "God helps those who help themselves." Van Hogendorp with some men of courage rescued the uprising and the fatherland. When on the morning of Sunday the 21st the officers of the new "Orange guard" appeared at Van Hogendorp's house, he read to them his third proclamation and they accepted the government that dared openly to throw off the French yoke. The sword was drawn and the scabbard thrown away. Commissioners were sent to Amsterdam to persuade the city to side openly with the revolt, and they succeeded on the 24th just as the first Cossacks under major Marklay appeared. Marklay took possession of the city for the allied powers, and the commissioners in a proclamation of the 25th affirmed for Amsterdam also "the restoration of our dear fatherland."

In these days of anxiety and uncertainty came the prince of Orange himself. He was still in London, when news of the rising in Holland reached him on November 21st. The prince hesitated not a moment and resolved to cross over as speedily as possible. On the 26th he embarked upon an English frigate at Deal, and in the afternoon of the 30th he arrived at Scheveningen. With general Van Stirum he rode through a shouting multitude to the house of Van Hogendorp, who at this historical moment "nailed to his chair by the gout, sat watching alone at home." In the evening there was feverish excite-



ment at The Hague, and a brilliant illumination celebrated the great event of the day. Liberation from the French yoke, restoration of independence and prosperity was to be completed by the prince according to his proclamation. As of old Orange had "sprung into the breach"; the prince and his son were to place themselves at the head of the "common fatherland." But in what rank? As stadtholder William VI. or as sovereign head of a new state, as "king" William I.? In the stirring days that followed this was the great question, to which the prince at first gave no answer. While he was still at The Hague and hesitated to give up the title of "prince of Orange" for that of "sovereign of the Netherlands," the matter was settled in Amsterdam. The commissioners there, Kemper and Scholten, on hearing of the prince's coming, issued a proclamation greeting William the First as sovereign prince by what was called "the summons of powerful Amsterdam—the voice of all the Netherlands." The prince hesitated still when he left The Hague for Amsterdam on December 2d. In Amsterdam he "yielded to the national desire," as he wrote to his mother next day, and allowed himself to be saluted as "sovereign prince of the United Netherlands." But he refused to take the title of king, believing that the allies would not like this "until a territorial augmentation enables us to be a consistent kingdom." Under the lead of William the First, sovereign prince of the United Netherlands, the work of liberation was now to be undertaken with the help of the allies. A new period in the life of the Dutch people had dawned, if only the enemy could be driven from the fatherland.



## CHAPTER XXII

### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW STATE

WITH the elevation of the prince of Orange to sovereign prince of the new United Netherlands the proper chief was given to the rising against French rule. On December 6th he took over the authority from the general government of Van Hogendorp and Van der Duyn. The title of "Royal Highness" and the royal crown, with which his arms were decorated by resolution of January 14th, made it known that thenceforth the bearer of sovereignty was to be not the States-General but the prince himself. There was much to be done before the revolution could be regarded as finished. In the first place the country had to be secured by getting possession of the fortresses still in French hands. The sovereign prince called for volunteer soldiers and made an appeal for financial sacrifice. The result of these measures was bitterly disappointing. The young hereditary prince William, returned from Spain and during a short visit to the English court betrothed to the princess Charlotte of Wales, arrived on December 19th and became general of infantry and inspector of arms continuing the organisation of the army. What could be done was done in haste, and the prince was restlessly active. In these days he showed a wonderful capacity for work and excellent talent for governing. It was fortunate that the prince could reckon, besides upon the plundering Cossacks, upon the coöperation of the energetic Bülow with



his Prussian corps and of the eight thousand English troops under Sir Thomas Graham landed in December. While peasants and citizens, partly armed with pikes, mattocks, and scythes, blockaded some forts, Benckendorff's Cossacks from Rotterdam occupied Breda and pillaged as far as near Antwerp and Brussels. Bülow forced Molitor behind the Meuse, but halted on hearing that the French from Antwerp were trying to win back the lost ground. For this purpose a force of fourteen thousand men under general Lefebvre-Desnouettes moved northwards. Bülow concentrated his troops and informed the sovereign prince of the necessity of a more vigorous participation of the Hollanders in the war of liberation. At the end of the year the goal was still far away. The allies had advanced to the Rhine with their armies, together almost a million of men, but there seemed to be a possibility that Napoleon, though disposing of scarcely eighty thousand men, might resist a long time and avert the invasion of the allies into France by consenting to the Rhine as a frontier. The war party among the allies triumphed over the more peaceful elements, and on January 1st Blücher crossed the Rhine. In the course of January the allies conquered all northeastern France and drove the army corps of Napoleon's marshals beyond the Rhone and Seine. Once more Napoleon showed his military genius and with his raw recruits defended the French territory against the superior armies of the allies—a hopeless struggle. The end was to be foreseen, and after the allies on March 31st had occupied Paris, Napoleon gave up the fight; on April 11th at Fontainebleau he signed his abdication, receiving possession of Elba and an annual income of two million francs with retention of the imperial title and four hundred men of his guard. On May 3d he arrived at his island on an English frigate, while in France the reign of the Bourbons was restored under Louis XVIII. After the defeats of Napoleon the

Dutch and Belgian fortresses remaining in French hands were left to their fate, but their garrisons held out bravely until Louis XVIII. commanded them to surrender. It was late in the spring before the territory of the state was entirely delivered from the enemy, and this delay must be attributed, besides to the fidelity of the French commanders to their beloved emperor, to the slow organisation of the Dutch army, which had grown to twenty-five thousand men and was preparing under the hereditary prince to move into France, when Napoleon's fall removed the necessity of so doing.

Of importance to the powers was it that the government of the state should be firmly established as speedily as possible, so that it could work with them as an independent power. The English government did not wish to concern itself with details, if only the central authority was made more powerful than under the old republic; it wanted a strong ally. Van Hogendorp in the early days of December had offered to the sovereign a "sketch" of a constitution for the new state. It was resolved to place this sketch in the hands of a commission appointed on December 21st to draw up a constitution. The commission met at the house of Van Hogendorp, who was tormented with the gout. The deliberations lasted two months. On March 2d the constitution was finally presented to the prince. With its one hundred and forty-six articles this constitution formed a compromise between the old political principles, upon which Van Hogendorp's sketch was based, and the modern ideas coming into vogue since 1795 and 1806, especially those of a monarchical tendency. Six hundred "notables" were summoned to meet at Amsterdam on March 29th to consider the constitution. Within a few hours it was approved by four hundred and forty-eight against twenty-six votes, and this approval was proclaimed the same day. On the 30th followed the taking of the oath and the investiture,



and the herald concluded the ceremony with a—"Long live William Frederick, sovereign prince of the United Netherlands!" Thus the first constitution of the United Netherlands was accepted, so it was said, by the whole people.

The year 1814 saw many important events. The peace of Paris, which on May 30th ended the coalition war against Napoleon, stipulated that Holland, "placed under the sovereignty of the house of Orange, shall receive an increase of territory." This agreed with the ideas advocated by the prince at London in 1813. Van Hogendorp also was convinced that the new kingdom of the United Netherlands, if it was to be Europe's bulwark against France, must be enlarged with Belgium. These views became those of the English government, which sent over Lord Castlereagh at the end of December to deliberate with the allies. The sovereign prince, whom Castlereagh visited at The Hague on January 8, 1814, persuaded the latter of the desirability of a union of all the Netherland provinces. Impatient to assume the government of Belgium also, the prince was advised to be patient and to use no other expedients than "by emissaries or other means quietly to encourage the people." Castlereagh arrived at Basel on January 18th. He began to develop English wishes concerning the Netherlands and to urge the annexation of Belgium to the territory of the old republic. At the congress of Châtillon (February 3d to March 15th) this question of European policy came up for discussion and was settled February 15th by the agreement of Troyes as desired by England. As covenanted with Austria and Prussia, Russia joining them later, Belgium was to be annexed to the old republic, and a further extension on the left bank of the Rhine was put in prospect. A ministerial conference at Chaumont (March 3d), where the foundations of a great European alliance for twenty years were laid, admitted the Nether-

lands independently—the first official recognition of the new state. In Belgium a strong party wanted to renew the old bond with Austria and by a deputation at Châtillon secured the preliminary appointment of the Austrian general Vincent as governor-general at Brussels in the name of the emperor Francis (May 6th). This disappointed the prince, though it was merely a measure of transition. Not until the peace of Paris was Belgium's fate decided, and France also agreed to the union of that country with the old republic in a powerful monarchy. In the southern provinces there was great fear of annexation to Holland on account of the heavy burden of Holland's debt, the possibility of closing the Scheldt, and the Roman Catholic religion. To overcome difficulties the prince resolved to go to Paris, accompanied by Falck, whose diplomatic talents he had learned to appreciate, and by his English adviser, Clancarty. There the powers were induced to accept eight articles drawn up by Falck concerning the union of the two countries. They left for Paris on May 20th and were back on June 5th, the prince all impatient to take possession of Belgium. Now that the troops of the allies had evacuated the country, came the opportunity for doing this with the secret London protocol of June 21st, established by the plenipotentiaries of the allies. The protocol asserted that the allies wished to unite Belgium and Holland in accordance with the points embraced in the eight articles advanced by Lord Clancarty. A month later these eight articles were signed in strict secrecy at The Hague by the Holland government "as the basis and conditions of the reunion." On August 1st the prince entered upon the government, if not with the title he wished to avoid, actually as governor-general of the powers, and appointed Van der Capellen (August 12th) secretary of state as head of the government. So the government of Belgium was regulated in expectation of the resolutions of the Vienna



Congress. The difficulties between England, France, and Austria on one side and Prussia and Russia on the other, by which in the spring of 1815 a war threatened to arise over the division of Napoleon's spoils, influenced the final result and made the prince give up the left bank of the Rhine, while in exchange for the hereditary Nassau lands Luxemburg was adjudged to him as a grand duchy. With regard to the colonies England's idea was that: "It is for us to judge what must be returned or kept," because it was the owner by right of conquest. On August 13th in deep secrecy the treaty regarding the colonies was signed by Fagel. The United Netherlands by it obtained, with the exception of Ceylon, all the possessions of the East India Company in the East Indies with an exchange of Cochin for Banka; the Cape had to be given up as well as Essequibo, Demerara, and Berbice. Three weeks later the treaty was ratified.

The real leader of affairs was the prince with his innate desire of doing everything himself. A great disappointment to him was the breaking of the engagement of the hereditary prince to the English princess, who sent her betrothed a letter of dismissal on June 16th. In the course of 1814 the state internally became more established. It may be said that the new state of the United Netherlands was a monarchy, in which the prince's great power was only slightly limited by a seemingly "liberal" constitution, and that under him the old aristocracy conducted the government. The union with Belgium was to make other arrangements necessary than could serve for the old United Netherlands alone. The demands of the Belgians with regard to the conditions of this union were excessive. In his first negotiations with the Belgians the sovereign prince made promises calculated to remove their fears. After the powers in February, 1815, had decided upon the complete union and this was announced in Brussels, the prince still hesitated to assume the royal

title; he did not resolve to do so until March. The news that Napoleon had landed at Cannes made a speedy settlement of the matter desirable. So the States-General met in the Binnenhof on March 16th and were received by the prince with an address, in which he declared his resolution to take the supreme authority over all the Netherlands and the royal dignity over the realm, "from this moment the kingdom of the Netherlands." Van Hogendorp as president gave his congratulations, ending with—"Long live the king." A week later the powers at Vienna recognised the new "king of the Netherlands and grand duke of Luxemburg." On April 22d a new constitutional commission was established to "consider what changes would be necessary or useful" for the new situation. It consisted of Van Hogendorp as president and twenty-three members, twelve of them being Roman Catholics.

Before the commission began its sittings on May 1st, the political circumstances had already taken a turn very dangerous to the existence of the new state. Napoleon's journey from Cannes to Paris was a triumphal progress, while Louis XVIII. and his court retreated to Ghent under protection of the Anglo-Netherlandish army of observation in Belgium commanded by Wellington. The autocrat sought support in a liberal constitutional monarchy, hoping thus to win over the French people for the new struggle against the powerful seventh European coalition. Europe refused absolutely to recognise the new empire; it declined to believe in the conqueror's love of peace, and the four great powers in March had once more allied themselves against him, burying their mutual dissensions in face of the common enemy, the son of the revolution. War stood again before the door, and here also the anxiety of spring was soon to end. On June 12th Napoleon left Paris to fall upon Belgium at the head of his army of one hundred and seventeen thou-



sand men. His plan was to defeat first Blücher's army of one hundred and fifty thousand Prussians, then Wellington's Anglo-Netherlandish army of ninety thousand men, and afterwards the Austrians and Russians slowly moving to the Rhine. He wanted to anticipate his enemies, and they had committed the great fault of not attacking him before he was ready. In Wellington's army was the Dutch-Belgian force under the young prince of Orange and his brother prince Frederick, relatively weak and composed of hastily formed line regiments and undisciplined militia. In the middle of June the Netherlandish army in Belgium amounted to 31,000 men, including 3600 cavalry, with 72 cannon and 6600 horses. Is it strange that Wellington felt slight confidence in these troops? The English commander endeavoured to make up for the want of experience in a part of his army by uniting some divisions of the Netherlandish force with trained English troops. The prince of Orange had command of Wellington's first army corps of thirty-two thousand men, including two Netherlandish divisions of infantry under De Perponcher and Chassé besides one of cavalry under De Collaert, together twenty thousand men. On June 12th Orange with his corps stood in the vanguard at Braine-le-Comte. In the second corps, that of Lord Hill, of the twenty-five thousand men ten thousand belonged to the Netherlandish troops under prince Frederick. The general reserve of over fifty-one thousand men under Wellington had its headquarters at Brussels. Wellington and Blücher had to come to an understanding for the defence of Belgium. In the apprehended attack by Napoleon Wellington wanted to secure Brussels and Ghent, while Blücher from the Sambre and Meuse was to assail the advancing enemy in the flank. So the allies waited for the enemy. Wellington stood between the sea and the road from Brussels to Charleroi with the prince of Orange in the van, while prince Fred-

erick was in the rear with Lord Hill. Mixed English, Hanoverian, and Dutch detachments occupied the chief fortresses in the south. The population there was not entirely to be depended upon. The French government of the last twenty years counted many friends and admirers. It was related that shortly before the decisive battle banquets were ready for the French at Brussels and Ghent, and the orange cockades disappeared from the hats. During a few months the French and the allied troops had stood on the frontier opposite one another, when in the middle of June a suspicious activity was noticed among the French, and it was reported that Napoleon had arrived at Maubeuge with his guard. On the 15th he fell unexpectedly upon the Prussian van at Charleroi, eager to defeat Blücher before Wellington could come to his help, and then to attack Wellington himself. He surprised his adversaries, while Wellington and his officers in the evening of the 15th were amusing themselves at a ball in Brussels. The French succeeded in pushing Blücher's advanced guard back of Charleroi and next day in inflicting a severe defeat upon the aged field-marshal at Ligny, while Ney watched the Netherlandish-English troops at Quatre-Bras. Gneisenau in place of Blücher led the retreat not in the direction of the Rhine but towards Brussels in order to aid Wellington in case of necessity. Ney with his superior force might easily have defeated the prince of Orange on June 16th at Quatre-Bras, but he began the fight too late and thereby lost his opportunity. Not until two o'clock did he with nine thousand men attack the weak Netherlandish and Nassau battalions under Orange and Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar, which, thrust back at first but soon supported by cavalry under the personal lead of the gallant prince William, held out courageously, until more troops appeared and Ney in presence of too great a force, after a desperate assault, gave up the contest. Deep was



Napoleon's wrath at his marshal's neglect, but he himself on the 17th missed a chance to defeat Wellington separately. Orange's valiant resistance at Quatre-Bras was of great importance to the subsequent course of events, though Napoleon's remark at St. Helena, that "all the honour of the campaign belongs to him," was evidently inspired by hatred of Wellington, and this deserves all the more notice, because Wellington himself first ordered the evacuation of the important point, and only the disobedience of general De Perponcher on advice of general De Constant Rebecque prevented the execution of this command. On the 17th the Prussians fell back farther, not upon Liege, as Napoleon had expected, but upon Wavre, in the best of order and ready to help the English. Wellington, by the unexpected defeat of the Prussians forced also to retreat, took position with his whole army on the plain of Waterloo. Napoleon, instead of attacking him on this day with all his force, sent marshal Grouchy with two army corps after the not entirely beaten Prussians and slowly followed with the other sixty-two thousand men the English army of sixty-nine thousand men into Brabant. Then was fought the decisive battle of Waterloo. In this famous fight, which did not commence until late in the morning at eleven o'clock, the Dutch troops defended themselves bravely at the farm La Haye Sainte under Saxe-Weimar, at the tavern La Belle Alliance, and elsewhere, especially the militia of colonel Westenberg. But Napoleon was on the point of breaking the English order of battle at Mont-Saint-Jean, when suddenly about six o'clock in the evening Bülow appeared at Planchenoit on the field of battle with Blücher's vanguard hastening from Wavre. By a last furious charge of his guard and a forward movement of his whole line Napoleon tried to win victory, before the entire Prussian force arrived. In this last attack under Ney upon the heights of Mont-Saint-Jean, stub-

bornly held by the English, the prince of Orange fighting at the head of the Nassau troops was wounded in the left shoulder and had to leave the field. Soon afterwards the battle was decided, and the French troops fled in disorder through Hainaut to the frontier, taking the emperor along in their flight. At the last moment, while Brussels was crowded with wounded and fugitives, the government stood ready to remove to Antwerp, and Wellington feared for the result of the combat, the coming of the Prussians settled the fate of the day. The last battle was lost and the destiny of the empire of the "Hundred Days" was decided. Hastening to Paris, Napoleon was compelled by the united chambers to abdicate. He hoped still to save the crown for his son and offered as a simple general to keep the enemy out of Paris, but it was too late, and the capital again went over to the allies (July 3d). Napoleon fled to Rochefort and sought refuge on an English frigate for protection against the "factions" in France and the "hostility of the powers." But he was not allowed to land in England and was taken with some of his faithful followers to St. Helena, far from the scene of his exploits, arriving there on October 16th. The Netherlandish troops took part in the new invasion of the allies into France. At Paris on September 26th the Holy Alliance was concluded between Russia, Prussia, and Austria at the instance of the romantic czar Alexander of Russia, who was sojourning with the king of Prussia in the French capital, where Louis XVIII. had returned on July 8th under the protection of the allies. Other powers were gladly received in the Holy Alliance, and France, the English regent, and the Netherlands joined it. The Dutch troops returned home and the field army was disbanded (December 22, 1815) by prince Frederick, while the prince of Orange journeyed to Russia there to marry Alexander's youngest sister Anna Paulowna, which marriage bound



the reigning princely house to the most powerful monarch of Europe at that time.

Amid the turmoil of war in the last Napoleonic time the new constitutional commission continued its activity. For accepting the constitution in Belgium it was resolved to summon an assembly of notables in the south also. Fifteen hundred to sixteen hundred notables were considered sufficient for the population of three and a half millions. A report of what had been accomplished ended the work of the commission on July 13th. It could separate with the satisfaction of having done important labour, by which the constitution of 1814 was not only made ready for the south, but was also modified in a liberal spirit. On July 18th the draught was made known in a proclamation, together with the hitherto secret London articles. Between August 8th and 19th it was discussed in the north by the States-General and was unanimously accepted. In the south the constitution gave more trouble. Violent opposition came from the clergy, who demanded that the Catholic clergy should have constitutional rights and asserted that the established equality of religious worship was enough to call for rejection of the law. On August 18th of the 1573 notables 250 did not appear, 796 rejected the draught, of whom 126 declared it was on account of the articles concerning religion, and only 527 voted for the draught. Adding the 126 votes to the 527 and referring to the unanimity of the north, a royal proclamation put the constitution in force. So the constitution was accepted on August 24th. The establishment of the kingdom of the Netherlands, of the complete realm of the seventeen provinces, Europe's bulwark against France, was thus accomplished. King William's ideal became reality. It was generally said that the unity of the new nation was confirmed upon the field of Waterloo. But many saw the difficulties, with which this *mariage de convenance* would have to contend.



## CHAPTER XXIII

### FIRST YEARS OF THE NEW KINGDOM

UNDER all sorts of difficult circumstances William I. began his reign over the kingdom that seemed finally to bring the realisation of his ideals. New order had to be created from the chaos left behind at the departure of the French. Altogether it was a labour of Hercules, to which the king with his staff of officials desired to devote his life. Indefatigable, sincere, and honest, accustomed to look after details, he was a conscientious administrator. He was accessible to everybody, gifted with a good memory and a clear view of men and matters, simple, moderate, and frugal for himself, penetrated with an earnest sense of duty, mindful of his great responsibility to his people, to God who had put him in this place, but often too confident of himself. He would have been taken for a Dutch burgher or merchant rather than for a monarch. His great fault: arbitrariness, stubborn adherence to his own opinion, made him want to do everything in his own way and to consider all opposition as disobedience or as lack of judgment. In the council of state and in the first session of the States-General the dissension between north and south was evident particularly in the treatment of financial affairs. Many in the south, especially the disaffected clergy, acted as enemies of the king's rule. At the head of this opposition was Maurice de Broglie, bishop of Ghent, who placed many French priests in Flanders, in-



weighed against the constitution, and in the autumn of 1816 went so far as to publish a pamphlet against the bishop of Namur, who had prescribed prayers for the approaching confinement of the princess of Orange and thus had sinned against the principles of the Roman Catholic church. To Broglie and his friends the constitution remained a thorn in the eye. In April, 1816, Van Hogendorp drew up a memorial to the States-General in the form of an "advice." Printed and distributed to the members of the council of state and of the States-General, it aroused the king's anger. This was not because it was unjust but on account of the sharp way, in which Van Hogendorp spoke of the difference of interests, of the almost insuperable difficulty of reconciling them, of the mutual sacrifices necessary to maintain the union between south and north. The king considered the circulation of this document, injudicious and not always fair to the south, as harmful to the interest of the state. On November 7, 1816, he gave—ostensibly so requested for reasons of health—to Van Hogendorp his dismissal as secretary of state and vice-president of the council of state, offering him a place in the insignificant First Chamber, which the deeply offended statesman declined, preferring his place in the Second Chamber, where he could make himself heard. More and more the king carried on a "personal government." Under the constitution of 1815, adopted with such serious resistance from the side of the Roman Catholic church, the opposition increased, though the government made liberal allowances to churches and priests. With every inclination to remedy religious grievances, the king was not willing to accede to exorbitant demands and deemed it his duty as sovereign to accept the battle offered. The contest began with the prosecution of de Broglie before the council of state. The bishop refused to appear and took refuge in his native land. The case was referred to the

court of assizes, which affirmed the presence of a "political crime" and condemned the bishop to deportation and costs, which sentence was posted on the scaffold at Ghent on November 19th. Not until bishop de Broglie died at Paris in 1821 could there be any thought of a new concordat, urgently desired by the government in place of that of 1802, for regulating Catholic affairs. The Dutch administration began to understand how important it was to be on good terms with the papal see for the sake of its numerous Catholic subjects—of the five and one half millions of inhabitants little more than one million were Protestants and perhaps one half million were liberal Catholics or skeptics.

The Belgian liberals, led by excellent orators and jurists, were vigorously heard in the Second Chamber, where they found opportunity to oppose some measures of the government regarding legislation and justice, prosecutions of the press and financial matters, the increase of Dutch influence in the south. Thus in the early years of the new kingdom there arose a beginning of parliamentary opposition, especially from the liberal and Belgian side. Many were the debates in the Second Chamber, where south and north violently opposed one another. The southern members pointed out the differing conditions in south and north, which made it impossible to treat both alike or undesirable to subordinate the interests of the more populous south to those of the north. The resistance of the clergy in Belgium irritated the predominant Protestant northern members, who could scarcely accustom themselves to the complete equality of Catholics and Protestants. The government was able finally to come out of the strife unharmed. Inflicting blows on its liberal or clerical opponents by preventing their reflection, taking away their offices, bridling their press, removing them from the country; then yielding to pressure at some point; bending before resistance or



proudly refusing to discuss its views, the government saw a chance to maintain its authority, so that about 1820, when all Europe was agitated, a relatively exemplary calmness prevailed in the new kingdom. The balancing policy seemed about to conquer, and many admired the wisdom of the monarch, who with the support of his ministers appeared to approach his goal, his ideal—the mingling of the two parts into one whole. Under these circumstances the thought must have occurred to many, that it would not be possible to keep up the close union of such different parts and that the work of 1814 and 1815 was a great mistake, as had been felt by some in north and south at the time of the union. Among the southern members of the States-General some did not hesitate to say openly that they did not wish to become Hollanders, which was paid back to them in the same coin. Some privately besought England, Prussia, or France to annex the southern provinces or aimed at complete independence. And it was no secret that the prince of Orange, not educated in Holland but growing up in the camps of Wellington, was not pleased with the direction of the government, that he had slight sympathy with the reserved manner of the Hollanders and felt more at home among the lively Belgians in Brussels than at the stiff court of The Hague, where he seldom showed himself. The prince made it evident that he did not approve of the attempts at “Hollandification” of the Belgians. So he became the hope of the discontented Belgians, and this did not improve the sometimes strained relations with his father. His brother, the young prince Frederick, brought up in Germany and prejudiced against all French influences, was much respected in the north, and this opposition was considered hazardous for the future of the kingdom, though it could never disturb the friendship between the two brothers. In 1817 the Austrian ambassador von Binder wrote to his government

about "the false idea of a moral and political amalgamation of two countries diametrically opposed," about "the false political organisation of the kingdom." He tried to win favour for a new organisation, for "a federation between the two countries, each governed in a manner suited to its situation," at least for an administrative separation, and found support from Metternich, who advised him to discuss the subject with the influential English ambassador, Lord Clancarty, the king's confidant, while Vincent endeavoured to persuade Wellington at Paris. The plan had to be given up, as it was not to be carried out without England, and as Wellington and Castlereagh wanted as little interference as possible of the powers in the affairs of the young kingdom. The king also would not hear to it, and his advisers in 1820 did not yet despair of the possibility of making both parts go well together. Tacking between difficulties remained the watchword of the government.

The young prince of Orange had not only had dealings with the French exiles, but had even listened to proposals for procuring the French crown for himself with the aid of Bonapartist elements in the French kingdom. But these plans did not coincide with his father's ideas and were ultimately given up. That they signified more than is usually supposed appears from the prince's correspondence with the exiled Carnot in Germany and others, especially from the secret reports of the French police. These adventurous schemes attracted the attention of the great powers of the Holy Alliance on account of the part prescribed in general European politics for the Netherlands as the "dike and rampart" against France. The four great powers of the Vienna Congress, meeting at Aix-la-Chapelle in September, 1818, resolved upon the evacuation of France and the admission of this country as the fifth member of the "pentarchy," which was to determine the fate of Europe. The relation to the



Germanic confederation gave rise to difficulties, not least by reason of the activity of the king's representative for Luxemburg in the diet, Hans von Gagern, the tireless leader of the smaller German states and champion of imperial union. In the first sessions of the diet at Frankfurt in November, 1816, he advocated eloquently the idea of a close union of the German "confederate state" with the Netherlands in a great "German empire." So ardent was his patriotic zeal that Metternich urged and obtained his dismissal in April, 1818. Relations with the powers remained good, but not more than that. Averse to Austria's policy under Metternich of reaction against all aspirations for liberty in various lands, the king was left out of the deliberations on the subject. He was considered a defender of liberal-monarchical principles and enjoyed ever less the confidence of the Holy Alliance and its leaders, who looked upon him and his kingdom as a dangerous example to other nations. With England relations were excellent, though they did not lead to the very friendly understanding expected by the English statesmen, when they consented to the sacrifice of the colonies conquered after 1802 "to keep up the popular feeling in Holland in favour of this country," as Lord Liverpool had written in January, 1814. In settling the actual surrender of the promised colonies it became evident that the old distrust, the old rivalry of the two North Sea states had not entirely vanished. The English lieutenant-governor-general, Thomas Stamford Raffles, who had now governed the colonies nearly five years, had taken the opportunity to introduce important reforms in Java. But Raffles had powerful enemies, and they secured his recall to Europe to justify his rule, when he heard of the proposed restitution. This was a great disappointment to him, because he saw the value of these colonies and hoped to fasten a new brilliant pearl to the crown of England's colonial possessions.

Not until August did the real surrender occur of Java and Macassar, while that of Banka and Palembang took place in November; that of the Moluccas held off until the spring of 1817, of Malacca and Padang until late in 1818. Sent back to India as lieutenant-governor of the English Benkoelen, Raffles obtained for the British Company Singapore, really a Dutch dependency, destined to be the centre of the Straits Settlements. He hoped to attain the ideal of his life, the establishment of English rule in the archipelago, where he already called himself "representative of the English government." The relation remained friendly but not without danger of complications. Assured of England's protection, united with Russia and Prussia by dynastic bonds, friendly with France of the Bourbons, William I. could defy the reactionary policy of Austria led by Metternich. This kingdom could not pretend to be a great power like the old republic. As one of the first among the powers of the second rank, it took its place, eminent by its dense industrial and commercial population and under a monarch who seemed worthy of his task.







## CHAPTER XXIV

### KINGDOM OF THE UNITED NETHERLANDS FLOURISHING

THE first trying years of the newly established state had fortunately passed by, and though many a man shook his head doubtingly over the mingling of the interests of north and south still unattained, over the government's action towards the Catholic clergy, over its mixed autocratic-constitutional character, with unfeigned admiration it had to be recognised that the government, under the guidance of the now almost universally praised monarch, had done very much in a few years to accomplish its difficult task, especially to promote the country's material prosperity. Figures show that from 1824 to 1827 Dutch exports increased from eighty-four and one half to nearly ninety-six millions, and imports from forty-six to almost sixty millions. New canals and ways of communication were taken in hand to make the chief commercial places as well as the country and the smaller towns share in the growing commerce. After the example of England the king did not wish to have Dutch commerce as before a carrying trade in foreign goods, but wanted to support it with domestic industry. This must be vigorously developed, then commerce would follow of itself. In the years before 1830 the Netherlands were the second maritime nation of the world, being surpassed only by England which possessed five times as many vessels, but it should be remembered that England's population was twenty-two millions, while that of

the Netherlands was estimated at over six millions. The king gave special attention to the Indies as a market for the developing industry. The establishment (March 29, 1824) of the Dutch Commercial Company promised to influence the growth of commerce and industry. Negotiations at London between the English and Dutch governments resulted on March 17, 1824, in a treaty, by which England was granted free navigation in India upon the footing of the most favoured nation, and the Netherlands might enjoy the same rights in the English colonies. Van der Capellen, whose governorship in India had brought disappointments, was replaced at the end of 1825 by Du Bus de Ghisignies, a Belgian, as commissioner-general, with the commander of the army, De Kock, as actual head of the government. In their time a dangerous insurrection of the natives under Diplo Negoro lasted years and injured Dutch commerce. A companion of the East India Company in a new form was to be the great American company with headquarters at Amsterdam and warehouse at Curaçao. There were great plans, and the digging of a canal across Nicaragua—if the one then proposed for Panama did not go through—was considered by general Verveer, one of the ablest engineers of the Netherlands. But political events prevented the execution of these plans.

Numerous factories showed that industry, which in the southern provinces was undeniably flourishing, particularly in Brabant, Flanders, and Liege, was coming up also in Holland. In many articles, of manufactures and metal work especially, competition with England could be maintained about 1830, and that with France was easy in articles of luxury and apparel. The first industrial city was Ghent, the picturesque capital of eastern Flanders, with its sixty-six cotton factories and thirty-five thousand workmen, its many sugar refineries, its great machine shop. Then followed Liege with its metal in-



dustry and coal mines, from which sixty thousand men lived.

The watchful king directed his attention not alone to the material prosperity of the country. Art and science had much to thank him for, and he supported energetically the Dutch language and literature in their efforts to penetrate into the south, so that Dutch might become the national language of that part of the kingdom also. The system of two languages (Dutch and French) was actually adopted in higher education in the south, although most of the lectures were given in Latin, as everywhere in Europe. At each of the six universities new professorships were founded in the sciences. The Leyden and Utrecht observatories were equipped with new instruments by the government, and a great observatory was to be established in Brussels. Libraries, laboratories, and scientific museums were newly organised and enriched by the purchase and gift on a large scale of books and manuscripts, of entire collections. Soon the Dutch universities could measure themselves again with those of foreign countries, giving renown to Wytttenbach and Van Lennep, Cras and Brugmans, Haus and Warnkönig, Wageman and Cassel, to Van der Palm in theology, Van Hemert and Kinker in the Kantian philosophy, to the Platonist Van Heusde, the orientalist Hamaker, the botanist Reinwardt, the physician Suerman, the jurist Kemper, and many others. The government wished to promote "patriotism, civic virtue, and preservation of the national character," for which purpose it recognised as most important the study of the national history, language, and literature. For the development of art in the countries of Lucas van Leyden, the Van Eycks, Rembrandt, Rubens, Van Dyck, and Frans Hals the government had eyes and purse open. Schools of drawing, music, and painting came up in the chief cities; at Amsterdam and Antwerp art academies were established;

promising artists were sent to Italy by the state, and works of art were bought. The young sculptor of Mechlin Louis Royer, the historical painter of the north Pieman and his son, the young historical painter of Antwerp Wappers raised the fame of the new kingdom, and especially in the south with the artistic temper of the people the future of art looked hopeful. On the other hand poetry flourished more in the north, while in the south the immoderate use of the acquired French language by the cultivated classes and of the Flemish, Walloon, and German dialects made all literary attempts difficult. The talented Bilderdijk, "who carried a whole world in himself," showed his mastery over form, his profundity, his luxuriant imagination, his harsh ridicule, his receptive mind in many a lyric, in his philosophical poem *De Dieren*, in his masterly *Ondergang der Eerste Wareld*, in his *Muis-en Kikvorschkrijg*. Disappointed in his expectations of honour and fame, too high and too deep for his people, who read him little or not at all, disturbed by the spirit of the time, he placed himself with conscious power and fierce hatred over against his contemporaries, hurled his passionate curses and tirades in poetry and prose against everybody and everything, against government and science, art and literature, philosophy and the politics of his time. In 1817 he settled at Leyden, where as private teacher in the university he unfolded the history of his country "legally, critically, diplomatically in an entirely new way," with deep respect for the great princes of Orange and with contempt for the opposing mercantile States. His lectures, directed against the "profound ignorance" of Wagenaar and the revolutionary spirit and self-sufficiency of his own days, awakened response in the minds of his disciples: Da Costa, Capadose, Willem and Dirk van Hogendorp, Groen van Prinsterer, Wap, Jacob van Lennep. As a poet he opposed the school of Feith and Loots, of Helmers and



Tollens. He poured the vials of his wrath over the "bad and stupid" Borger, the "Judas" Nicolaas van Kampen, the "impious" Van der Palm, the "conceited" Kemper, the "pedantic spoiler of language" Siegenbeek, the "perverse and crooked race" of the Kinkers and Van Hemerts, followers of Kant and Fichte. His last hopelessly embittered years the old man spent in Haarlem, ever writing verse and scolding, until in 1829 his power for work gave way and after two years his life ended in voluntary solitude. He is the great literary figure of the young kingdom. His school, from which proceeded the mediocre poets, Van der Hoop and Wiselius and his wife Katharina Wilhelmina, furnished at last the young and ardent Isaac da Costa, who in 1823 threw his *Grievances against the spirit of the age* in the face of his liberal contemporaries. And with them worked and thought the gifted Willem de Clercq, whose talent became more and more a means of evangelisation. At some distance beneath Bilderdijk, Da Costa, and De Clercq stand David Jacobus van Lennep, the learned singer of the *Hollandschen Duinzang* (1820), and his son Jacob, whose *Nederlandsche legenden* (1828) transplanted here the romanticism of Scott and Byron, the not seldom affected Staring, the sentimental Spandaw. But the poet of the people is undoubtedly Hendrik Tollens, whose works were sold and read by thousands and assured him a popularity like that of Cats. With Messchert, the poet of the *Gouden Bruiloft* (1825), and Bogaers, the talented writer of *De togt van Heemskerk naar Gibraltar* (1836), he forms the Rotterdam trio. They and Kemper, Loots, Van der Palm, Borger, Siegenbeek mirror in literature the Dutch domesticity, sobriety, mediocrity, caution, self-sufficiency. Romanticism appearing in poetry with young Van Lennep, with numerous novels translated from French, English, and German brought Dutch literature under the influence of

Byron and Scott, Hugo and Lamartine, Tieck and Schlegel.

Intellectually the opposition between south and north came plainly to light, to the advantage of the latter, which for more than two centuries had known a vigorous intellectual life in Protestantism, while in the south all mental development was suppressed under the powerful influence of a clergy, which almost unrestrained had ruled over education, literature, and ecclesiastical life and had kept them certainly not over the scale attained soon after 1600. In the north popular education flourished and science and literature could compare with those of foreign lands, universal development prevailed as nowhere else; in the south stood an undeveloped multitude, intellectually satisfied with the fulfilment of their church duties, in presence of a French civilisation going with many to complete unbelief after the manner of Voltaire and the Revolution. Shortly before 1830 the general impression of those acquainted with what had been accomplished in the fifteen years of the kingdom's existence was that despite all difficulties the king had for the time succeeded in uniting the two parts of his realm into a whole. Freeing itself more and more from French influence, which in the eighteenth century had poisoned the life of the people of the north and threatened in the south to stifle all national independence, the kingdom of the Netherlands seemed on the way to become what had been the chief aim of its establishment: a powerful, political, and moral bulwark of Europe against the agitation of France—a flourishing kingdom, liberally governed, with remarkable viability rising from deepest decline and vividly recalling the Burgundian realm of Charles V. Of this rise much of the honour was due to the monarch himself, lauded as a model for the princes of his time, as a wise, practical, and talented ruler, who in the full understanding of his duties and



rights with gentle force and adroit statesmanship managed to escape the rocks threatening the ship of state and with firm hand to steer his vessel towards the safe harbour. The financial policy of the government continually aroused opposition. The chamber members apparently left to the government the complicated financial questions which they did not understand. The traditional indifference to the treatment of public affairs in the north worked into the hands of the government, though often it had to hear hard words from the south. Thus on the whole it could carry out its plans unhindered. The government encountered serious difficulties in its measures and policy concerning the Roman Catholic church. The opposition of the bishops and the resulting dissension with the papal see influenced ecclesiastical relations in the south as well as in the north. On August 17, 1827, negotiations led finally to a new concordat, which in general confirmed the rules of 1801, while the education of the clergy was to be more fully regulated by deliberation with the bishops; the government was to have the right to exclude candidates for the bishoprics by its declaration that they were not agreeable, and the bishops had to swear allegiance to the king. By concluding the concordat the government had displeased the liberals in the south and the northern Protestants. Trying to satisfy all by yielding on one side and by adhering fast to its principles on the other, it was soon to experience that instead of making all its friends and helpers it had estranged all from itself—the necessary result of its ambiguous policy.

The condition of the kingdom was not unfavourable. Its domestic difficulties seemed not to lead to serious complications, and relations with foreign countries were very satisfactory. Relations with England under the Whig ministry of Canning until his death (1827) left little to be desired. In 1828 the Tories came into power

under Wellington, who was very friendly to the Dutch. Although no danger was apparently to be feared and nobody in the country thought of a revolution that would make the kingdom fall apart, in 1828 there was something, which should have persuaded to great caution the government, that more than once had stood before a united Belgian opposition, the more so because in France the idea of an annexation of Belgium had not disappeared, but was beginning to revive again: the desire to extend the frontiers of France to the Rhine, in order to wipe out the shame of the defeat of Waterloo and to break apart the kingdom of the Netherlands established as the bulwark of Europe against the French lust of conquest, was very strong in France and haunted the heads of rulers and ruled more than ever. From the liberal as well as from the Catholic side the Belgian press had repeatedly mentioned the points of agreement between the political grievances of both parties: the autocratic action of the government, its press prosecutions, its aversion to freedom of education, its slight fear of violating the constitution, its evident desire to guide the entire state in the spirit of the north—this all excited in the Belgian liberals and Catholics mutual friendliness, which was soon to bring them to open coöperation. The example of France spurred the Belgians to imitation. Against the “priest party,” which had there obtained the government with Charles X., the opposition in 1827 caused the fall of the hated Villèle ministry. A liberal newspaper of Liege suggested in March, 1827, the dropping of religious differences of opinion in the interest of a common political opposition. The chief organ of the Belgian liberals, the *Courrier des Pays-Bas*, the paper of the talented De Potter, protested at first against this “monstrous alliance of the modern and the Gothic.” The men of Liege proposed a union of liberals and Catholics to form an ecclesiastically neutral “national majority”



in the Second Chamber (November, 1827). The Catholic organs clasped hands with the liberals in defence of the constitution rejected by them in 1815. The government—the strict Van Maanen possessing the king's confidence—relied upon the law of 1818 to curb the excesses of the press. But young Charles de Brouckère in the Second Chamber, supported by liberals and clericals, demanded the repeal of this law of exception. Press prosecutions began again, some against editors of the *Courrier*. This journal now opposed the government; formerly it had cried "Death to the Jesuits!" now it said: "Let us ridicule, shame, pursue the ministers." In October, 1828, it published a so-called speech from the throne explaining the desires of the Belgian liberal opposition. On account of the article De Potter was sentenced to imprisonment for eighteen months and a fine of one thousand guilders. A mob accompanied the carriage of the popular journalist to prison and smashed the windows of Van Maanen's house with shouts of: "Long live De Potter! Down with Van Maanen!" The government in December proposed a repeal of the press laws, but would not hear to ministerial responsibility and freedom of instruction. In January, 1829, a general petitioning broke out, tens of thousands signing the petitions in the south, while the north took little part in the movement. The government's press proposal was accepted, and it sounded really very liberal. Its good effect was spoiled by the establishment of a government journal, *Le National*, managed by the notorious Italian swindler Libry-Bagnano. He found against him De Potter, who did not lay down the pen in prison. In the summer of 1829 appeared De Potter's pamphlet *Union of the Catholics and liberals in the Netherlands*, saluting the coöperation between the two parties as a most important event in the country's political life. The movement was still on a constitutional basis; there was no talk of a separation

of the two parts or of a revolution. But the opposition began to be expressed in more violent terms. It was evident that things could not go on thus, if the government wanted to continue in power. Bend or burst seemed to be the watchword, and it looked as if the government would not succeed with its customary tacking policy. The session of the States-General of 1829-1830 began under auspices unfavourable to the state. The rejection of the financial laws was urged, if the government did not remedy the existing grievances. Against such a possibility the king resolved upon an extraordinary measure, consisting in a detailed royal message with the new press laws of December 11, 1829. It referred to the regulation of Catholic interests by the concordat. It appealed for support of its educational measures. It declared that inconsiderate demands should be refused with firmness. The government would do its best henceforth to avoid conflicts and to settle the relation of local and provincial administrations to itself besides the finances. It called for harmony in the establishment of social order, which must be defended "against the usurpations of a misguided multitude as well as against the ambition of foreign violence." These sharp words made the best impression in the north as a "manly act" against Jesuits and Jacobins. In the south, however, they were greeted with doubt, especially when the government sent the message in a circular to all the governors to be distributed among their subordinate officials for approval. The government continued its ecclesiastical concessions, which seemed to improve the situation. More Belgians were appointed to ministerial offices. The meetings of the States-General were more poorly attended and lost their importance.

This strong action of the government excited opposition in the south. New means of popular agitation were constantly sought. On January 31, 1830, appeared



in no less than seventeen Belgian newspapers a plan for a "national subscription" to indemnify members of the States-General deprived of their other posts. February 3d there was a more extensive plan for a "patriotic confederation" to recompense all officials taking part in the "legal resistance." This plan caused a new prosecution of the imprisoned leader, whose papers being seized showed that he worked in collusion with others and that Tielemans, formerly an editor of the *Courrier* and now referendary in the ministry of foreign affairs, was the inventor of the plan of national subscription. The papers of De Potter and Tielemans brought about their trial, and things came to light that bordered upon conspiracy against the state. It became plain that the young liberals were hostile not only to the king, who was spoken of as a Philip II., a Charles I., a Louis XVI., with Van Maanen as Alva, Strafford, or Calonne, but also to the prince of Orange accused of complicity in a theft of jewelry to the injury of his wife. De Potter was condemned to eight years of exile, Tielemans to seven years. Three days later the seized correspondence appeared in print to show how the proposed "patriotic confederation" was to have established a state within the state. The disclosures in this trial strengthened the government's position. The Chambers separated on June 2d. A royal resolution allowing the use of both languages in Belgium made an excellent impression on the opposition there. The quiet here was the more remarkable, as a revolution had broken out in the neighbouring France. After the fall of the Villèle ministry, which interpreted the meaning of the clerical king Charles X., the moderate Martignac ministry had vainly tried to satisfy the liberal opposition and in August, 1829, had been succeeded by the reactionary Polignac ministry, which on July 26, 1830, proclaimed the noted ordinances—a *coup d'état* against the constitution of 1815. On the

second day afterwards the opposition resorted to arms and soon threw up barricades; on July 28th the commandant of Paris, marshal Marmont, acknowledged: "It is no longer a revolt, it is a revolution." Marmont tried in vain to restore order by violence. The republican tricolour everywhere replaced the white flag of the Bourbons. Charles X. on August 2d abdicated in favour of his young grandson, the duke of Bordeaux, after he had declared his kinsman Louis Philippe, duke of Orleans, the "lieutenant-general of the kingdom." But this was not sufficient. The replacement of the clerical Bourbons by this son of Philippe Égalité, the liberal duke of Orleans, was demanded, and on the 7th he assumed the crown. The new king, Louis Philippe, no longer "king of France," but "king of the French," was to be a constitutional monarch, a "citizen king." Belgium seemed to have no inclination to follow the example of France. The great majority of the Belgian population was Catholic and did not like the new government in France, and the majority of the liberals since the disclosures of the De Potter trial appeared more than ever convinced of the desirability of not quitting "the legal way." The grievances of the Belgians were not taken away, and the opposition watched for every opportunity to voice them loudly. On the other side the government with pride could point to the flourishing condition of agriculture and industry, commerce and communication, to the canals and roads, the universities, the excellent primary education, the revival of art and science, the growing prosperity—all apparently signs of the monarchy's strength, its population having increased to over six million souls. Against a revolution, however, the government was from a military point of view powerless, and English or Prussian intervention would surely provoke a European war with France. With no uneasiness the king on August 21st left the southern capital in order



three days later to celebrate his birthday in the faithful The Hague. But preparation for an insurrection was making without the government suspecting anything. The liberals favouring France were resolved to venture, counting upon the French sympathies of many citizens and of the clergy and upon the moral, if not actual, support of France itself.





## CHAPTER XXV

### SEPARATION OF BELGIUM

THE French faction in the south did not sit still. Young Gendebien from Brussels urged the French government to annex Belgium. Early in August De Brouckère, De Stassart, and Le Hon went to Paris to negotiate over the union with the now liberal France. The offices of the *Courrier des Pays-Bas* became the centre of secret deliberations, and Gendebien, supported by the young lawyer Van de Weyer, took the lead in the proposed movement. The French government, however, was not ready and asked postponement. On account of the agitation the police of Brussels resolved not to allow the fireworks announced for the eve of the king's birthday. All was quiet on the day itself, but during the night it became turbulent in the capital, and on the 25th threatening crowds moved to the middle of the city. In the evening there was great excitement at the theatre during the performance of the *Muette de Portici* with its songs of liberty and memories of Masaniello's insurrection at Naples in 1648, and it was soon communicated to the crowd outside. Shouting "Down with the king. Long live De Potter," a mob flocked to the office of Libry-Bagnano's newspaper *Le National*, broke the windows, and then went to his house and plundered it. Unchecked by police or garrison, the disturbance spread, and finally Van Maanen's house was set on fire. The small garrison, less than thirteen hundred men, was now called out, but



the commanding general Van Bylandt ordered only guard duty. Early in the morning of the 26th bloody encounters took place, but the garrison withdrew to the park to guard the palaces. From that moment the plundering and burning increased. At the instance of some notables replacing the city council, the organisation of a volunteer citizen guard was begun under the ex-general Van der Smissen and the ex-officer Pletinckx, and it soon numbered two thousand men. On the 27th the popular Emanuel baron d'Hoogvorst was put at the head of this citizen guard, a few fights occurred, but next day order was restored, and Brussels resumed its ordinary appearance. A deputation on the 29th went from Brussels to The Hague with the report of the restoration of order respectfully to remind the king that the discontent had deep roots in consequence of "the fatal system followed by ministers who mistake our prayers and needs." The king had held a council of ministers, and it was resolved to summon the States-General to The Hague for September 13th and to send the two princes to Brussels with troops. The Brussels delegates were received by the king on September 1st, and he told them that ministerial responsibility was against the constitution, that with the knife at his throat he could not dismiss his ministers, but that he would think of it; he refused to yield "to wild threats, to complaints, to grievances imagined by some disturbers of the public peace."

The approach of the troops excited Brussels again, and the entire population took up arms. The princes at Vilvorde spoke with D'Hoogvorst and other deputies of the citizen guard and issued an imprudent proclamation announcing their entrance with troops. Immediately barricades sprang up on all sides under the lead of the former French general Mellinet and the Spanish officer don Juan van Halen, who had written a work on the defence of cities against regular troops; the stones were

torn from the streets, the shops closed, and Brussels suddenly assumed the appearance of a besieged city on the eve of a bombardment. A second deputation led by the prince de Ligne sought to persuade the prince of Orange to come into the city alone with his staff. The prince resolved to accede to this request, and on September 1st at noon he entered the city on horseback, seemingly calm and even smiling. He put himself at the head of the citizen guard, made his horse jump over the barricades, and pushed through a half-hostile crowd to his palace, accompanied by the deputation, answerable for his safety, and by his general staff. Personally popular he went through the streets, spoke with all sorts of men, and consulted with the authorities and some notables. On the 2d he put forth a reassuring proclamation. The prince decided to go to The Hague to mediate between the government and the Belgians. The Brussels garrison also left the city. The attitude of the population of the north showed that the feeling was anything but favourable to a peaceful solution. The king himself, though he finally dismissed Van Maanen, was not more inclined to give way, as appeared from a proclamation of the 5th with its appeal to the good citizens against the rioters. Agitation persisted in Brussels, stirred up by the club of French partisans from Liege, with Charles Rogier at the head, who urged complete separation and excited the people against the army under prince Frederick still remaining at Vilvorde. A "committee of safety" soon took the functions of the city government; in turn it had to give place to the Central Club, established by Charles Rogier, which assumed the management of affairs, arming the people and inciting them to resist the troops. The increasing excitement in the capital induced prince Frederick, who had moved his headquarters to Antwerp, to go with his army and occupy the city, on hearing that the well-to-do citizens of Brussels



desired the coming of the troops to end the uncertain situation dangerous to their property after the disarming of the citizen guard in accordance with the wish of the lower classes. He issued a proclamation on September 21st announcing his project. The volunteers in Brussels made ready for armed resistance. So little in earnest was their organisation that in the night of the 21st the city's walls and gates were unguarded. Discouragement prevailed among those who had hitherto led the movement. Prince Frederick's troops approached slowly and gave an opportunity to the chief political leaders to escape. Gendebien, Van de Weyer, Felix de Mérode, Niellon, De Potter, Rogier, despairing of the possibility of resisting the ten thousand men of prince Frederick, fled over the French frontier. Only a few champions remained behind to fight the Dutch as best they could. In the morning of the 23d the Dutch troops appeared before four of the city gates and demanded admittance. They seized upon these gates and at ten o'clock were in possession of the entire upper town. Easily also the lower town might have been captured, although the leaders offered sharp resistance at the barricades. But the prince, averse to bloodshed, began to find difficulties in the barricade battle, which here and there made the unaccustomed regular troops fall back, and in which women, children, and old men fought savagely. All day the fight went on especially in the Rue Royale and on some of the boulevards, until evening came and the combatants withdrew; the barricades were deserted, and the Park, where the soldiers were lords and masters, was wrapped in deep stillness. At the prince's headquarters in Schaerbeek there was disappointment, and D'Hoogvorst and others endeavoured to persuade him to stop the attack and retire the army, but the prince refused. On the 24th volunteers flocked early into Brussels, and some of the fugitives returned. The conflict was re-

sumed and lasted through the day. Late in the evening it ended as before. For the following day the defence was placed under Van Halen, "commandant-in-chief of the active forces," so designated by D'Hoogvorst, Rogier, and the ex-officer Jolly, who took general charge as "administrative commission." Rumours of an intended pillage of the city by the Dutch troops excited the population on the 25th to continue the combat. In the night the Dutch had had every opportunity to take the deserted barricades, but the opportunity was neglected, and in the morning of the 25th the barricade conflict began anew; Van Halen even ventured an attack upon the Park, and his volunteers penetrated into it for a time. In the night the barricades were again unguarded and unmolested. A Provisional Government, consisting of the three men mentioned, De Mérode, Gendebien, and Van de Weyer, was formed on the 26th. For the fourth time the Dutch troops tried to push through the Rue Royale, but they were repulsed, and the volunteers established themselves in the Park, so that only the palaces with their immediate surroundings remained in the hands of the troops. Early in the night prince Frederick resolved to retreat and had the Park evacuated. When the volunteers in the morning again opened fire, the Park appeared deserted, and soon the flag of Brabant waved upon the royal palaces. The revolution was victorious, and the Dutch troops retreated to the frontier, counting seven hundred and fifty dead and two thousand wounded, while the Belgians had four hundred dead and eleven hundred wounded.

While these events occurred in the south, the States-General met at The Hague. A royal message put two questions: Whether experience has shown the necessity of modifying the national institutions? Whether in that case the relations established by treaties and the constitution between the two great divisions of the kingdom, for the promotion of the common interest, ought to be



changed in form or nature. The great majority of the southerners declared for separation, that of the northerners in the Second Chamber against it. After a state commission of sixteen persons was appointed on October 1st to draw up "legal provisions" for the separation, the session was closed on the following day. The commission had no chance to begin work at once. The Provisional Government at Brussels, strengthened by the popular De Potter, who was greeted as the "Belgian Lafayette," soon saw itself recognised by all Belgium and resolved on October 4th to establish an independent state of the Belgian provinces, to prepare a new constitution, and to convene a national congress. The chance of reconciliation seemed not entirely lost, provided the popular prince of Orange was intrusted with the management of affairs in Belgium. The king sent his oldest son on October 4th to Antwerp. The next day the prince issued a proclamation, expressing his desire to restore peace and promising a separate government under himself as ruler. The good impression of this proclamation was injured by the king's answer to the resolution of the Provisional Government: the "To arms" of the 5th in a fiery proclamation to the inhabitants of the faithful north to suppress the opposition and to protect their native country. From that moment the two parts stood in armed opposition, and a civil war was inevitable. On October 2d the king had applied to the four allied powers of the Vienna Congress "to deliberate in concert with His Majesty upon the best means of putting an end to the troubles which have broken out in his states." Armed help was requested, but it was quickly evident that this could not be counted upon, because France would not hear to it and threatened to send its own troops in case the former allies appeared with troops in Belgium, and England hesitated to endanger peace. Hence sprang a beginning of coöperation between these

two powers. Before the king's request had reached the powers, the French government had sent the experienced Talleyrand, seventy-six years of age, to London to look after the interests of France in the "important affair of the moment." When the Dutch demand for assistance by the "immediate sending of troops" came to London, England and France agreed that means must be contrived for the restoration of order. The idea of a conference, suggested by France, gained ground to the great disappointment of the king. The first meeting of the conference took place at London on November 4th, and Wellington declared its chief motive that "the powers must undertake to seek the means of conciliation and persuasion most suited to stop the effusion of blood in Belgium, to calm the extreme irritation of minds, and to restore domestic order." A truce seemed the first thing necessary, and king William, hoping to gain time, did not object; he relied on England's coöperation under the lead of Wellington, one of the creators of his kingdom, the man who was accustomed to consider this creation as "the chief work of his lifetime." The Provisional Government in Brussels and the king's government at The Hague agreed to the armistice on November 10th and 17th. The English were satisfied that the wish of the Belgians for annexation to France was thwarted, now that France itself took part in the conference.

Meanwhile the prince of Orange at Antwerp had attempted to save Belgium for the dynasty and to put himself independently at the head of the southern provinces. He was willing to become sovereign of Belgium, provided the king approved of this step. In a letter of October 13th the king consented on condition of an offer from the side of Belgium and of approval by the powers. The prince negotiated with the Provisional Government. He was induced to go further than his father had really allowed and on the 16th put forth a short proclamation



recognising the Belgians as an "independent nation." This imprudent act could not bring him to the desired end of rescuing Belgium for himself and his house without his giving up his claims to the crown of the northern provinces; in the south it awakened no confidence in his wavering attitude; it angered the people of the north. The prince's position became so ambiguous that it was untenable. On the 25th he left Antwerp with a bitter proclamation, in which he admitted the failure of his mission and declared he was going away to wait for events. He saw his father secretly at The Hague and departed on November 2d for London to be near the conference of the powers, which seemed still to regard him as the future sovereign of Belgium. His chances, however, dwindled with every day. The National Congress of Belgium was proclaimed, and the elections took place on the 27th under the deep impression of the bombardment of Antwerp by Chassé. After the departure of the prince of Orange the energetic Chassé was threatened in the Antwerp citadel by the volunteers of the city. When on the 27th the gates and walls were evacuated and their garrison retreated to the citadel, it was shot at from the houses and suffered severe losses. Finally Chassé answered the violation of the truce, agreed upon between him and the leaders, by some drunken assailants of the arsenal, protected by his troops, with a heavy bombardment, which inflicted great damage on the commercial city and killed many people. Not until the 30th did a truce put an end to hostilities. The bombardment of Antwerp turned Belgium from the house of Orange, and when on November 10th the Congress opened at Brussels, led by the aged Liege nobleman Surlet de Chokier it again intrusted the Provisional Government with the executive power. On the 22d followed the establishment of a "constitutional and representative monarchy." De Potter, who had desired a republic, relinquished his share

in leading affairs. The next day was pronounced the exclusion of the house of Nassau " forever from all power in Belgium " by a majority of one hundred and sixty-one against twenty-eight votes. The conference at London was far from pleased with this resolution. The young Sylvain van de Weyer, an eloquent diplomatist, went to London (November 1st) to win favour for Belgium and its plans. The fall of the Wellington ministry on November 16th, succeeded by the Whigs under the lead of Grey and Palmerston, was a great advantage for the Belgians, as they could count upon the moral support of these liberal ministers. And Palmerston was assuredly one of the ablest but also one of the most unreliable diplomatists of his time, ready to sacrifice the best grounded rights to the temporary interest of his country.

In the conference Palmerston and Talleyrand represented the two as good as allied powers. The Dutch government saw its ambassador Falck admitted to the deliberations only as a " witness." Talleyrand, clinging to his favourite ideas: coöperation with England and no intervention, but annihilation of the kingdom erected against France, managed cleverly to bring the conference where he wanted it. He prevented the choice of the Austrian archduke Charles; already were mentioned the names of the duke of Nemours, the Napoleonic duke of Leuchtenberg, the Bavarian prince Otto, and prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, the former husband of the English princess Charlotte. There were objections to all these princes, and the chances of the prince of Orange as independent sovereign of Belgium rose higher, though it appeared that the Belgian clergy wanted a Catholic monarch. Lord Ponsonby, who from early in December represented England in Brussels, played there with his secretary White a very ambiguous part and, while England officially supported Orange, he worked secretly for prince Leopold, from whose English sympathies much



was expected at London. The Dutch government hoped still for the armed help of the powers. To act with the too pliant Falck it sent a second ambassador, baron Van Zuylen van Nyevelt, in order better to withstand the powerful Anglo-French alliance. That its fear was not unjustified appeared from the seventh protocol of the conference, of December 20th, by which it was resolved definitively to dissolve the unsuccessful union of Belgium with Holland and to establish an independent Belgium "with the preservation of the European equilibrium." The Belgian government sent Van de Weyer and count Vilain XIV. to London to take part in settling the conditions of the separation. Against this the Dutch government protested. It had Falck say that not the dismemberment of the kingdom but the reestablishment of order was its reason for asking the aid of the powers. The Belgians also were not satisfied with the decision; they wanted to see Luxemburg, Limburg, Dutch Flanders, North Brabant recognised as Belgian territory. The conference in January resolved to make one more effort to have the prince of Orange accepted by the Belgians as their sovereign. Palmerston and afterwards the Austrian and Russian ambassadors at London offered the crown to the prince still sojourning there on January 11th, provided he would accept it immediately. The prince grasped the opportunity with both hands. He issued a new proclamation to the Belgians offering himself as the safest candidate for the throne. When his father refused consent and demanded the maintenance of the unity of the kingdom with administrative separation of Belgium under the prince as viceroy or stadtholder, the latter held back and proposed this new plan to the conference. It saw the impossibility of this idea and advised the prince to wait in London for the decision of the Congress at Brussels concerning the crown. This decision was a long time coming. On February 3d

Nemours was actually chosen, not without the connivance of princess Adelaide, the energetic sister of king Louis Philippe, who neglected no intrigues to enhance the glory of her family. A deputation departed for Paris but returned a fortnight later with an absolute refusal. Bound by the resolutions of the conference, Louis Philippe dared not excite a European war and declined for his son. On the 23d the Congress chose temporarily Surlet de Chokier as regent. The conference went on with its work of completing the separation. The protocol of January 20th laid down the "bases designed to establish the separation," stipulating that the boundaries of the Netherlands should again be those of 1790 with Luxemburg in the possession of the house of Nassau as a part of the Germanic Confederation; Belgium was to be "a perpetually neutral state," guaranteed as such by the powers. The Congress declared that it desired to see "the integrity of the territory respected." On the other hand king William I. consented to a settlement of the affair by the powers and to complete separation of the two parts, probably in the hope of saving the Belgian crown for his son. In Belgium some desired the elevation to the throne of Lafayette, Chateaubriand, Surlet de Chokier, or Rogier, of a member of the high Belgian aristocracy. A partition of Belgium was even discussed in the conference. The English government gradually gave up the party of the prince of Orange and exerted all its powers for prince Leopold of Coburg. At the end of March the disappointed prince returned to the fatherland, where he was received with evident coolness.

Over two months passed before the Belgian Congress made a new choice of a king. Relations between the north and Belgium did not improve in this time. The Belgian regent had difficulty in holding back the Belgians from taking possession by force of arms of the desired



territory; and the Dutch government could hardly restrain the army and the volunteers on the Brabant frontier. The heroic death of the naval lieutenant Van Speyk, who on February 5th blew up his gunboat at Antwerp rather than let it fall into the hands of the insurgents, increased the warlike feeling in the north, excited by patriotic speeches and popular songs. The discussions over the Belgian constitution in the Congress led on February 7th to the adoption of a draught, by which Belgium became one of the most liberally governed states of Europe. It was plain that the prince of Orange had slight chance of success in Belgium. The candidacy of prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg attracted attention more and more. In May, 1830, he had refused the Greek crown, but he was ready to accept the crown of Belgium and with the aid of his physician and friend von Stockmar had his cause advocated cleverly to the Belgians and the English government. In Belgium Leopold's candidacy won adherents by adroit intrigues. An official deputation went late in April to London and found him ready; though a Protestant, he promised to have the children by his proposed marriage brought up as Catholics, which satisfied the Catholics. Prince Leopold on June 4th was elected by one hundred and fifty-two votes, with fourteen for Surlet, nineteen not voting, and ten against. Great was the exasperation at The Hague over the attitude of the western powers. The king informed the conference that from June 1st he considered himself perfectly free. He made ready, either with the powers, or upon his own responsibility, to take military measures against the unwilling Belgium. England and France, now determined to finish the affair, bound themselves on the 16th to intervene in case of war between the two parts. The conference on June 26th adopted a new agreement to be laid before both countries in the interest of general peace, consisting of "Preliminaries of a

treaty" in eighteen articles. Prince Leopold, now sure of the support of the conference, accepted the crown officially, provided the Congress at Brussels approved of the eighteen articles. The Congress assented on July 9th. Then Leopold declared he had no further objections, assured himself of his recognition by the five powers, and the 17th set foot on Belgian soil. Four days later after a triumphal progress from the frontier to Brussels homage was done him, and he swore to the constitution. King William declined absolutely to accept the eighteen articles, adhering to the "bases of separation" approved by him in January. A note of the 12th reported this refusal to the conference with the communication that whoever accepted the sovereignty over Belgium without submitting to the "bases" would be considered an enemy to Holland, and this country would defend its right with arms in hand. Arms were now to decide. A plan of campaign was made by the prince of Orange for the army concentrated on the borders of Brabant near Breda. On the 29th the prince was chosen commander-in-chief. Two days later he left The Hague, and on August 1st it was: "Forwards, with God for fatherland and Orange!" The same day Van Zuylen announced at London that the Dutch ambassadors were empowered to sign a treaty on the basis of the January protocols, but that the king was resolved "to support the negotiation by military means." It must be acknowledged that he had every reason to act thus.

Of the nearly eighty-seven thousand men of the Dutch army thirty-six thousand formed the portion available for a campaign. The Belgians could put against them only thirty-one thousand five hundred men: seventeen thousand under the former Napoleonic officer of hussars De Tiecken de Terhove, as the "Scheldt army," observed the citadel of Antwerp with its garrison of four thousand men under Chassé, and fourteen thousand five hun-



dred commanded by general Daine, as the "Meuse army," held in view Dibbets garrisoning Maestricht with almost six thousand men. The plan of campaign adopted by the prince of Orange was simple. The intention was to push in between the two Belgian armies, to defeat them one after the other, and then to occupy Brussels. The blow had to be struck quickly, because the intervention of France was to be expected, since the conference on July 25th had declared it would prevent any "resumption of hostilities." King Leopold immediately called for French help. The Dutch troops in three divisions, under the duke of Saxe-Weimar and the generals Van Geen and Meijer, moved methodically from North Brabant into Belgium and drove back easily the Belgian advanced posts. A proclamation from the prince of Orange announced that the aim of the campaign was no conquest but only the securing of "fair and equitable conditions of separation." Turnhout was occupied on the 3d, while king Leopold from Brussels summoned the Belgians to arms and assumed the chief command over his armies. He applied to the conference with an urgent request for the protection of neutrality, the maintenance of the armistice, violated by the sudden attack of the Hollanders, and placed Antwerp under its especial guard. King Leopold, believing Antwerp was to be the object of attack, ordered Daine to unite with the Scheldt army. But the prince turned not westwards but upon Diest, which was occupied by Saxe-Weimar on the 5th, while Van Geen took possession of Gheel, and Meijer put the enemy to flight at Beringen, where the Leyden volunteer chasseurs distinguished themselves and had to mourn the death of the student Beeckman. In small fights Daine's advanced posts were pushed back to Hasselt, and there he made a stand instead of marching to join the Scheldt army. There on the 8th the Meuse army was beaten by a superior force and driven towards Liege in

extreme disorder. Tiecken de Terhove endeavoured to unite with the remnants of the Meuse army but soon, by orders of his chief commander, moved to Louvain, now Leopold's headquarters, whither also Orange's army went without haste. A rapid march might have dispersed the Scheldt army likewise in disorder. But the prince would venture nothing and not until the 11th at Boutersem did a skirmish take place with the van of the Scheldt army, the result again favouring the Dutch. On the following day the decisive blow might fall before Louvain. King Leopold hoped for French help just then. But this illusion was speedily taken from him. His troops, no match for the regular force of the prince of Orange, were quickly beaten again, and the flying Scheldt army would have undergone the same fate as that of the Meuse, when just at the chosen moment, that the attack on Louvain was to be combined with the pursuit of the enemy retreating on all sides, Lord William Russell, the prince's adjutant at Waterloo, in the name of the English ambassador at Brussels, Lord Robert Adair, came to offer an armistice with the information that the French marshal Gérard with an army of forty thousand men had crossed the Belgian frontiers and was already at Wavre.

The Dutch government had given the assurance at Paris that its army would return within its borders on the report of the coming of the French troops into Belgium. Before the armistice Orange demanded the surrender of Louvain. The Belgian commanders, knowing Brussels to be uncovered now that Gérard moved so cautiously, consented, and the Dutch army occupied Louvain. The strategic aim of the ten days' campaign was thus attained. The two hostile armies were driven apart, and Brussels lay open to the conqueror, whose troops would not have feared to fight with the approaching French army. Carefully watched by the French, the army on the 20th returned to the Dutch frontiers. The



whole campaign had cost the Dutch army seven hundred men. The conference now imposed upon both parties a new truce of six weeks in order to end the negotiations over the conditions of separation before October 10th, which period was later prolonged fourteen days. The result of the deliberations was the protocol of October 14th, giving twenty-four articles as what could be in fairness demanded. The powers, appealing to the necessity of avoiding a European war, declared they would compel Holland to approve and would oblige Belgium to accept these "final and irrevocable decisions" of the five powers. The protocol divided Luxemburg into a Belgian and grand ducal part, and Limburg into a Belgian and Dutch part; the king of the Netherlands had to make an agreement with the Germanic Confederation concerning the two parts assigned to him; Belgium was to be a neutral state. Great was the anger and disappointment in both countries. The Belgian newspapers protested against the gross injustice of dividing Luxemburg and Limburg contrary to the will of the inhabitants, who had mostly declared for Belgium. On November 1st the twenty-four articles were accepted as "inevitable" in the Belgian Chamber of Deputies and Senate. The people of France were dissatisfied with the inglorious return of Gérard from Belgium, when not even the lion of Waterloo had been destroyed. The government at The Hague objected to the violation of its rights in the twenty-four articles. It asserted in a memoir of December 14th, that the Luxemburg question, concerning alone the house of Nassau and the Germanic Confederation, ought not to be mixed with the Belgian question, and that, according to the first principles of international law, the powers had no right to decide arbitrarily in a matter relating to the internal condition of the kingdom founded in 1815. There was talk of a new campaign on the Meuse, for which the prince of Orange had the plans.

But Prussia held such inclinations in check by its serious warnings. An agreement seemed not yet impossible. On January 4, 1832, the conference answered with a defence of its action, to which the Dutch government replied in a proposition of the 30th. The conference did not even take the proposition under consideration, as France and England thought that the three other powers would ratify the twenty-four articles, as they themselves had done on January 31st. After Austria and Prussia had agreed (April 18th), the ratification of Russia was delivered to the conference on May 4th. Opinion in Holland supported the government; the *Journal de la Haye*, for which the Leyden professor Thorbecke worked on behalf of the administration, defended the government against the conference. On May 4th the conference resolved to try a compromise concerning the execution of the twenty-four articles. The Dutch ambassador at London consented to a treaty to be concluded "under the auspices" of the powers embodying the twenty-four articles modified. The diplomats at the conference exhausted themselves in the attempt to satisfy the Belgians, who stood sharply on the twenty-four articles, and the Dutch, who would not accept them unmodified. This did not succeed, and while the marriage of king Leopold to Louise Henriette, daughter of Louis Philippe, in August bound France more closely to the Belgian cause, no progress was made. This did not much trouble Belgium, because it had a great advantage in the *status quo*, by which almost all Limburg and Luxemburg remained in its possession.

Finally a basis of agreement seemed to have been discovered. The so-called "Palmerston theme" was drawn up in August and was accepted by Belgium, as it left the twenty-four articles quite untouched, and on September 6th it was privately offered to Van Zuylen, the Dutch ambassador, who answered on the 20th with a



memoir refusing all further concessions. In the seventieth protocol of October 1st a more vigorous tone was adopted towards Holland. The measures of coercion often spoken of were put in prospect. England and France, under the lead of Palmerston and Talleyrand, went on their way. On October 22d the English government concluded with the French a treaty, by which was stipulated the giving to king William until November 2d to evacuate the citadel of Antwerp, the only point in Belgium's territory still occupied by Dutch troops. In case of refusal an embargo upon all Dutch vessels, blockade of the Dutch ports, and capture of the citadel by a French army were to follow. In the middle of November the embargo was laid, and the French campaign was begun. Gérard with sixty thousand men appeared on November 19th before the citadel, where Chassé with his five thousand men threatened Antwerp's safety. Chassé's defence, "a beautiful page in the military history of our fatherland," could not prevent the surrender. After the French cannon had almost demolished the fortress, when the water was giving out and the chief bastion had to be deserted, Chassé capitulated on December 23d. While the rear-admiral Koopman burned and sank his twelve gunboats, the troops garrisoning the citadel were taken to France as prisoners of war. The resumption of the conference was proposed. New notes led finally on May 21, 1833, to the London convention, by which the embargo was raised and a truce was concluded until the definitive treaty. But it was not for a moment doubtful that the final decision would have to be waited for years. The question was whether men must remain under arms all this time and must bear the great expense of a large army. The new conference at London held its first meeting on July 15th, but its work was obstructed on August 13th by Palmerston's sudden demand that the Dutch government should first ask the

consent of the Germanic Confederation and the king's relatives for the partition of Luxemburg before going further. The conference was suspended. On November 3, 1833, the king really requested the relatives and the Confederation to approve of the division of Luxemburg. But both refused, if no compensation in territory was offered to the Germanic Confederation. So the matter rested in the spring of 1834. The government desired to maintain its waiting attitude, although champions of an arrangement began to be more numerous. The uncertain situation worked more and more disturbingly in Holland, where people had enough of war taxes and made remarks upon the Luxemburg question, which concerned only the house of Nassau. But 1835 passed without bringing any change. Relations with England became no better, though for a time they had seemed to improve owing to the report of a proposed marriage of the young prince Alexander, second son of the prince of Orange, to the heiress of the English throne, Victoria. More and more it grew evident, that Belgium had an interest in prolonging the *status quo* and that Palmerston, now in the saddle for years and after the marriage of queen Victoria to prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg more closely than ever bound to king Leopold, wished to support the latter by calling together the conference.

The feeling in Holland towards the attitude of the government began to change. People became tired of the long postponement and of maintaining the army. The government itself appeared to have slight hope of the revival of the old kingdom. But the king could not so quickly resolve to give up the ideal of his life and long resisted pressure, ever watching for the desired changes in the political condition of Europe. Urged by the increasingly sharper opinion of the Second Chamber, the king at last repented. In a general committee of March 13, 1838, he declared that on the following day



he would offer at London a note, by which he, "constantly frustrated in his just expectation of obtaining by way of negotiations better terms for his faithful subjects," consented to the "final and irrevocable conditions" of the conference and promised to sign the twenty-four articles. The conference met at London and prepared with the Netherlands to sign the twenty-four articles, when Belgium made trouble. The Belgians, during seven or eight years in actual possession of most of Limburg and Luxemburg, would not hear to ceding a considerable portion of this territory to king William and Holland. People protested against the twenty-four articles as unworthy of Belgium. Preparations for war were made, and the Polish insurgent-general Skrzynecki, received with other Poles in the Belgian army, seemed the right leader for the conflict to be waged against conservative Europe, if necessary, for upholding Belgium's rights to the threatened territory, first of all against the Germanic Confederation and Holland. The long expected crisis appeared at hand. While Palmerston reassured the powers concerning England's attitude and disapproved of the "mad designs of the Belgians," France attempted to secure a modification of the twenty-four articles in favour of Belgium. Troops were assembled in Germany and France. War seemed to stand before the door, and the Dutch government, disturbed by the attitude of France and Belgium, prepared for defence. Belgium showed itself not unwilling to buy from Holland the coveted parts of Luxemburg and Limburg for sixty million francs. William I. refused the offer. The danger of war had not disappeared. The Belgian volunteers gathered, the reserves were called out, manifestoes of the war party appeared, and the Dutch government began to use the nineteen millions granted it by the Chambers, when the peace-loving minister Molé at Paris defeated the opposition, favouring help to Belgium and

led by Guizot and Thiers, secured the approval of his policy, and ventured to dissolve the French Chamber. On the day of this dissolution (January 22, 1839) the French ambassador at London signed the December protocol. The conference offered the concluding protocol in The Hague and Brussels. On February 1st the Dutch government resolved to consent to it unreservedly. Only after strong resistance could the Belgian government bring the Chambers to yield to the demand of the powers. Finally on April 19, 1839, the mutual treaties between the powers, Belgium, Holland, and the Germanic Confederation could be signed. The ratifications were not exchanged until June 8th. The difficult process of separation, which had lasted nearly nine years, was ended. The kingdom of the United Netherlands founded in 1815 had now ceased to exist. Henceforth, within its old borders, Holland was to lead its own life, separated again from the southern provinces, with which it had been closely united during fifteen years.







## CHAPTER XXVI

### END OF KING WILLIAM I.'S REIGN

THE kingdom of the Netherlands could again go on its own way. The part it had to play would be more modest but would give land and people an opportunity to develop according to their wishes and needs. King William in his private life received a hard blow through the death (October 12, 1837) of his gifted wife, the revered "mother of the country" Wilhelmina, who had enjoyed universal sympathy as wife and mother. He was more discouraged, when the social life at the simple court gave place to petty cabals and quarrels, particularly on account of his preference for one of the ladies of the court, Countess Henriette d'Oultremont. In the summer of 1839 he asked in marriage the countess, who was a Belgian and a Catholic, and this attracted notice in and outside of the court circle. A campaign of calumny was begun in the press, presenting the whole affair in a scandalous manner. Anger at the approaching marriage of the king to a Belgian Catholic became so great that signs of contempt were shown towards him in the streets and people advocated his abdication in favour of his popular eldest son. In March, 1840, the king resolved to yield and declared that he gave up the marriage. More important was the course of affairs regarding the desired revision of the constitution. Now that the Belgian affair was brought to an end, constitutional revision must again become a subject for the

serious exchange of thoughts. The system of government in financial matters was closely connected with the way things were managed in India. The idea still prevailed that the colonies were designed only to furnish profit for the mother country. An extensive plan of the able general Van den Bosch found fruitful ground. In his book on the *Dutch possessions in Asia, America, and Africa* he had advocated a return in a modified form to the old principles of the East India Company. He wanted the maintenance of a "forced cultivation" as advantageous to the fatherland and the colonies and suited to the habits of the Javanese. The king appointed (October 26, 1828) Van den Bosch governor-general of Dutch India. The extension of compulsory cultivation over all Java was recommended, so that the Javanese would give as tribute to the sovereign a part (one-fifth of the crop, representing sixty-six days of work) of the product of his ground, while the Commercial Company might attend to the sale of the merchandise in Europe. Van den Bosch reached India in January, 1830, and began energetically to carry out his ideas, but opposition and the trying climate soon made him wish to return home, provided his successor could work out his system. In J. C. Baud he found a willing colleague, initiated into his plans, which above all aimed to have remittances flow from India to the mother country, so that the government there might have sufficient means at its disposal without needing the help of the States-General in financial matters. On returning to the fatherland in January, 1834, he could regard his system as established in India and was able to leave Baud in authority. At the end of the first year three millions could be sent as profit; in 1834 the normal figure was placed at ten millions by Van den Bosch, who became minister of colonies in Holland and constantly urged the dependent governor-general to larger remittances. The best lands were seized for the forced



cultivation; the power of the regent families increased hand over hand; the unwilling villagers were compelled to work, under penalty of death, far beyond the number of days originally fixed. Thus arose an odious system of compulsion, by which the European officials and the native chiefs fared well, and the farms furnished great profits to the government, but the poor Javanese, with hardly land enough for his rice, was terribly exhausted.

Soon there was the government's need of advances from the Commercial Company. Privileged by the administration, it experienced years of great gain and had the financial condition of the government almost entirely in its power. On December 30th the government by royal message offered its very limited proposals for the revision of the constitution, after which the Second Chamber was to be sent home for an indeterminate period, while the insignificant First Chamber, the "king's menagerie," would of course submit. The Second Chamber, comprehending the gravity of the situation, refused to be dismissed thus, and resolved to resume its sittings within a fortnight. As a result of the discussions in the Chamber the government, which with difficulty had persuaded the king, modified its proposals into five and joined to them seven additional ones. While the first five made only the changes absolutely required by the separation, the new proposals were of more importance. They concerned the legal regulation of the right of suffrage, the diminution of the crown's income to one and one half millions, the regular communication to the States-General of the statements of receipts and expenditures for the colonies, the introduction of estimates for two years with more control of revenue and outgo by the States-General, better arrangement of the militia for defence. Furthermore the too populous Holland was divided into two provinces. The Chamber declined to consider the estimates so long as the government had not

brought in a bill for amending the constitution by ministerial responsibility. Reluctantly the government consented (May 16th). Then the discussion of constitutional revision began in the Second Chamber (June 2d). It continued three days, and the government's proposals were accepted. In accordance with the provisions of the constitution the Provincial Estates now appointed a Double Chamber to handle the revision of the constitution. The deliberations of the Double Chamber from August 4th to September 2d were far more important than those in the old Second Chamber. The government, sure of a majority after its proposal of ministerial responsibility, was not discouraged by the opposition of some members. It saw its proposals accepted by a large majority.

But the king did not plan to continue his reign under this constitution and under the changed circumstances. He perceived more and more that he stood in the midst of a new generation. People here began to come under the influence of ideas, which in foreign countries were already developed and had finally penetrated into the somewhat slow national spirit of the Dutch. This influence made itself felt in every department. A growing party in the Dutch Reformed Church was no longer satisfied with the one-sided rationalistic mode of thinking developed from the revolutionary ideas of about 1795, of which the preacher Van der Palm might be called the talented spokesman. People were no longer content with church organisation under the guidance of the synod. The Arnhem preacher Donker Curtius, president of the synod from 1825 to 1839, worked in a direction that might lead to a union of all Protestants in one church. There were two kinds of opposition to the synodal direction. On one side many wanted the victory of a devout conviction of belief over the merely formal in the Reformed Church; on the other maintenance of



the old strict reformed doctrine was demanded. Bilderdijk's disciples endeavoured, in opposition to revolutionary ideas, to place "the sparkling light of orthodoxy" in the candlestick. The Jewish poet Da Costa, converted to the Christian faith, had in 1823 in his *Bezwaren tegen den geest der eeuw* testified against the apostacy from the faith of the fathers; the acute convert Dr. Capadose and the stylist Groen van Prinsterer supported this testimony. A little book by Molenaar, the orthodox preacher of The Hague: *Adres aan alle mijne Hervormde geloofsgenooten* (1827), demanded vigorous maintenance of the church doctrine. In all sorts of reformed communities "exercises" outside of the church union began to come into vogue and were regarded with distrust by the authorities, conducted as they often were by unlearned men in opposition to what was proclaimed by the regular preachers. Many thought of recent occurrences in Protestant Geneva, where over against the state church accused of Socinianism a community of "some believers" had arisen, which might here also happen. There could likewise spring up what was called in Switzerland and France the "revival" or the "new gospel," which found excellent leaders in the Lausanne professor Alexandre Vinet, the Protestant Pascal, and the Genevan professor Merle d'Aubigné. The so-called "New Lights" of Zwijndrecht formed a half-communistic sect of peasants and labourers. These exercises and conventicles were watched with suspicion by the ruling synodal party. The work of the young Groningen professor Hofstede de Groot: *Gedachten over de beschuldiging tegen de leeraars der Hervormde Kerk*, made a sensation in the spring of 1834. He defended the assertion that there was no need of adhering to orthodoxy according to the Dordrecht synod, but the doctrine of the church was to be favoured only so far as it agreed with "God's word." It was not to be de-

nied that a serious movement was going on in church matters. Indignant at the inaction of the synod, some people formed the plan of seceding from the Reformed Church and founding a new church community on the basis of the "Dort principles." This project of separation went out from the preacher at Ulrum, Hendrik de Cock, who from the pulpit assailed the lack of orthodoxy in his colleagues. His sympathiser Scholte of Doeveren in Brabant came to his help, and on October 14, 1834, De Cock with many adherents signed an act of separation from the Reformed Church. In 1836 the number of the "Separatists" was estimated at several thousands. A meeting of Separatists, arranged as a "national synod," declared it wanted only to restore the "Dort church order" to honour and asked the king for recognition as "in truth a Christian Reformed Church" or rather as "the" Reformed Church. The royal resolution of July 5th refused them the title of "true Reformed Church" and did not place the new organisation upon an equality with other church communities, though they might form local congregations and hold household meetings. Not until the end of 1838 did the Separatist community at Utrecht under Scholte submit to the conditions offered, soon followed by that at Groningen under De Cock and by others. Several others obstinately refused, and a number of their members, mostly peasants and workmen from the north, sought some years later (1846) in North America under lead of the preacher Van Raalte the complete liberty of worship, which they believed could never be obtained here. In Michigan they formed the nucleus of the later Dutch colonies in and around Grand Rapids, which were very flourishing in the second half of the century and about 1890 attained a population of 250,000, including over 8000 born in Holland.

In literature an analogous movement brought clearness into the "misty atmosphere of the intellect" prevailing be-



fore 1830. The antiquated *Vaderlandsche Letteroefeningen* no longer satisfied the needs of the newer literary men. The *Recensent der Recensenten* (1805) of Kemper, Kinker, and Wiselius had already blown "the first trumpet," and about 1820 Bilderdijk's followers sounded the second. The third trumpet was the appearance of the prospectus of *De Gids* in August, 1836, the manifesto of a young school, which desired to break off from narrowness and partisanship. Bakhuizen van den Brink, Heye, Potgieter were the talented leaders of a new critical magazine: *De Gids* (1837), which opposed mercilessly conventionalism and by unsparing criticism endeavoured to lay new foundations for the intellectual life of the time. What they and their friends gave in that young review promised much, though the tone was far from moderate. Their attempt was supported by the older stylist Geel, professor and librarian at Leyden, who in his *Onderzoek en Phantasie* (1838) preached independence of opinion and breaking with old forms. And Kneppelhout's *Studententypen*, Beets's *Camera Obscura*, Hasebroek's humour in his *Waarheid en Droomen* showed what was to be expected from the future, which had had forerunners of importance in the dead young Aernout Drost, author of *Hermingard van de Eikenterpen*, in Jacob van Lennep with his *Pleegzoon* and his *Roos van Dekema* and his *Nederlandsche Legendes*, in Oltmans with his *Loeverstein* and his *Schaapherder*. A new time seemed to dawn not merely in ecclesiastical and literary affairs. From the other side of the North Sea Stephenson's steam horse made its triumphal entry after 1830, preceded by the steamboat. On September 20, 1839, was opened the first railroad in Holland between Haarlem and Amsterdam. More and more it appeared that new thoughts and new forms were everywhere marching on, and the old king was too much a man of the eighteenth century to feel at home amid all the new things. He saw that his time was past and

decided to yield to the pressure. For a monarch as the father of his country there was no longer a place in the Holland of 1840. On September 12th quite unexpectedly he gave notice of his "firm and irrevocable" resolution to abdicate. Not only the necessity of reigning thenceforth with responsible ministers and under control of the States-General, but also the bitter disappointment with regard to Belgium, the personal opposition to him, and especially his general impression of all that was changing around him persuaded him to this step at first kept secret. On October 7th the king summoned the princes, the chief personages of the government, and the court to Het Loo and there abdicated in simple fashion. It was done in a proclamation declaring it desirable that "a firm vigorous masculine hand, a younger life, free from the pressure of advancing years and not wavering from earlier recollections" should assume the government of the country. The king transferred the authority to the prince of Orange, the legal successor, and, as king William Frederick, count of Nassau, departed for abroad, his abdication and departure being regretted by only a few. This was a sharp contrast to the manner of his return twenty-seven years before.







## CHAPTER XXVII

### KING WILLIAM II.'S EARLY YEARS

WITH the constitutional revision of 1840 the Dutch government entered upon a new period, in which the king's personal rule, under ministerial responsibility and greater control of the States-General, could be limited within the bounds of better circumscribed constitutional provisions. But it soon appeared that in fact little more was changed than the person of the king, while the servants of the state and the forms of government remained about the same. William II. was quite a different man from his father. Chivalrous and amiable, hesitating at no sacrifice for the fatherland, communicative and friendly, captivating and good-natured, lively and alert, very sensitive to impressions, a man of taste, liberal and even extravagant, as little of a financier as a statesman by nature, not independent in judgment and often the victim of intriguers and bad advisers, wavering and nervous in anxious days, the new sovereign, with the best intentions, was not calculated for the difficult circumstances, in which he soon saw himself placed. His interesting personality, however, secured him a popularity that had not fallen to the lot of his father. His proud wife, the Russian princess Anna Paulowna, imparted new splendour to his brilliant court.

The king's inclination to spare the Catholics and to let other opinions come to their rights induced him in November to establish a mixed commission to investi-

gate the grievances of Catholics and orthodox Protestants against the existing elementary education. Its report brought about the royal decree of January 2, 1842, promising the appointment of members of the school committees and of teachers so far as possible from the different denominations and granting preachers and priests the right to examine and criticise the books used in the schools. The school contest was connected with the simultaneous new movement in the bosom of the Dutch Reformed Church. The opposition between Protestant and Catholic came to light with no less power after the separation from Belgium. Among the pending questions that of the not yet executed concordat of 1827 took a prominent place. The question was whether it would now be valid for the northern provinces alone. On October 9, 1841, a secret agreement was signed, by which the king expressed his desire that the pope should appoint no regular bishops in the kingdom, but only bishops *in partibus infidelium*, and promised to regulate satisfactorily elementary education. Only one of the old ministers, Van Maanen, now remained in office, and his days as statesman were numbered. In the spring of 1842 there was so much discontent with his extreme conservatism, that he was finally forced to resign. He was replaced by the Amsterdam lawyer F. A. van Hall, who had shown himself a talented jurist, and a clever orator of liberal principles. With educational affairs and ecclesiastical interests the finances especially attracted attention. Financial reform and constitutional revision became more and more the subjects of talk and investigation. Among the pressing matters belonged the conclusion of a final agreement with Belgium, upon which Falck, ambassador at Brussels, insisted from fear of a revival of the dreaded London conference, which had left the affair to the two countries concerned. After some hesitation Belgium had signed the treaty preliminarily



(November 5, 1842), but it was sharply disapproved of there, while in Holland it was as little approved of. After violent opposition the treaty was accepted by the Second Chamber. In Belgium the same happened not without difficulty. The acceptance of this treaty resulted from the condition of the kingdom's finances, the regulation of which appeared urgently necessary, but would cause great difficulties, because little was to be expected from an increase of taxation in the languishing state of national prosperity, and the needful economies were not easily to be secured. At the king's request Van Hall took in hand the ministry of finance. He consulted some Amsterdam financiers and Rochussen, who had resigned his place of finance minister. Thus arose upon the basis of the minister's own ideas a plan for clearing off the arrears, providing for the needs of the current service, and finally improving the financial situation. The government on December 11th offered three proposals: one to settle the arrears to 1840, one to cover the expenditures for 1841-3, a third to meet the estimated expenditures for 1844-5. Extraordinary measures were necessary to pay off the arrears amounting to over thirty-five millions. On December 28th again three proposals were presented for discharging the debt to the Commercial Company, for imposing an extraordinary tax of one and a half per cent. on property and its income, for issuing a "voluntary loan" of one hundred and fifty millions at three per cent. Great was the impression made by the six pending proposals. At first opinion was very unfavourable. But what else could be done? Amendments in the Chamber brought down the proposed loan to one hundred and twenty-seven millions. With clever statesmanship Van Hall succeeded (February 7th and 8th) in getting the bill passed concerning the deficit to 1840 and that on the deficit of 1841-3. On the 23d the deliberation commenced on the great tax and loan

law. After a debate of six days the bill was passed by thirty-two to twenty-five votes, a few days later also in the First Chamber—a brilliant victory after a hard fight. The question now was whether the loan would really be subscribed for. The Amsterdam bourse gave powerful support, as the credit of the country was at stake. At the end of March the subscription was a success. The dread of an income tax with the accompanying official or secret inquiry into the actual fortune, which would otherwise be necessary, made the last difficulties disappear. Two resolutions for the conversion of the redeemable Indian debt from five to four per cent. followed in April and were accepted despite the opposition, in which was heard Thorbecke, sent to the Second Chamber late in March by South Holland as the successor of the deceased Van den Bosch.

In the opinion of the government the constitution, under which so much could happen, was not in need of revision. The government came into antagonism with the political ideas of the middle classes, which insisted on the enlargement of their influence upon governmental administration. They desired a return to the principles of the revolutionary time but without its excesses. They fell more and more under the influence of modern political notions, as they were proclaimed in France by liberal newspapers like the *Journal des débats*, by liberal statesmen like Thiers and other leaders of the July monarchy. In Holland the liberal press united to lead the struggle against personal government and immovable conservatism, against aristocratic rule and limitation of popular influence. There was not the slightest desire to apply the socialistic-communistic principles of a Fourier, a Saint-Simon, a Proudhon, or to build up a new society on the ruins of the old. The existing society might be so improved that the action of individual initiative could develop itself in accordance with the philo-



sophical-economic principles, which under the influence of Bastiat and J. B. Say, the two Mills, Bright and Cobden gave rise to grand plans of social reform on the basis of personal economic freedom. Political movements came up in various countries; in Italy the striving was for unity of the whole peninsula; in France liberalism opposed the conservative personal government of Louis Philippe; in Germany the wish for union of the empire stepped more to the foreground; in England the Chartists asked for universal suffrage, the liberal economists demanded from the ruling Tories repeal of the oppressive corn laws, and the terrible potato disease of 1845 brought the people to despair, so that the leader of the government, Sir Robert Peel, was converted in the following year to the principles of free trade. The same potato disease in Holland was the occasion in September, 1845, of riots and the plundering of bakeshops by hungry mobs, particularly at The Hague, Haarlem, Leyden, Delft. The considerable increase of emigration to America in these years, from a few hundred to some thousands, proved that the situation remained unfavourable, because this increase could not be explained by the desire for freedom of worship alone or by the thirst for gold just then discovered in California.

What had just begun to appear under the rule of William I. now came out more vigorously. Thorbecke and his pupils at Leyden championed liberal principles; Potgieter and Bakhuizen van den Brink in their magazine *De Gids* put more modern ideas into literature and politics. This young movement was not to be governed by a company, as was proved in 1843-4, when some literary friends in Braga revolted against the tyranny of *De Gids*, when Hecker published his *Quos Ego* and Jan de Rijmer (Gouverneur) his satirical rhymes. At Leyden Geel and Cobet upon new foundations established the scientific study of Greek and Latin, De Vries

and Jonckbloet that of Dutch, at The Hague Groen van Prinsterer and Bakhuizen van den Brink that of history from the sources, at Utrecht Mulder that of chemistry, Schroeder van der Kolk that of psychology, Donders and Wenckebach that of physiology and mathematics. The attention of many was seized by what was happening in the still agitated Reformed Church in the direction of freedom of doctrine. One spirit inspired all, that of renewal, improvement, regeneration, and with enthusiasm the academic youth especially, the younger generation in general gathered under the banner of progress. They were all inspired by one idea, freedom, personal freedom of thought and action. They lived in a new world of thought, carried along in the mighty stream that flowed through all Europe in these years and inspired poets and prose writers to splendid creations of the mind. In a people like the Dutch with strong attachment to the church, with deeply rooted religious convictions formed by the history of more than three centuries, the conflict must be on ecclesiastical as well as on political ground. The Groningen school could unhindered proclaim its liberal principles. The fervent Leyden professor Scholten went further and demanded perfectly free criticism, laying the foundation for the "modern" philosophical-theological school to be developed in later years. This liberalism was obstinately opposed by Groen and his friends, adhering to the "principles of Dort." As the eloquent manifesto of the opponents of the modern ideas may be considered Groen van Prinsterer's *Ongeloof en Revolutie* (1847). The Van Hall government evaded this contest of opinions and continued the regulation of the finances so well begun. It did not suit the character of the minister to go the way pointed out by the modern economists. It was a question how long would be possible this system of evasion, of compromise, of sailing between the rocks, but the minister could boast of one



success: making the state's finances balance. The estimates of 1846-7 showed, for the first time in seventy years, a surplus of three or four millions, and the government thought that this fact would shut the mouth of the increasing opposition. The result was to shame the expectation; the movement of the new time was to carry Holland along in the victory of modern ideas; what would not bend, must break.





## CHAPTER XXVIII

### CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION OF 1848

IN all Europe prevailed dangerous agitation, which made its influence felt in Holland also with the increasing discontent at the slight inclination of the existing government for reforms. In France the approaching revolution was talked of openly; in England, where the Whigs were again in power, it was hoped by liberal measures to hold in check the Chartists and the turbulent factory operatives and by intelligent legislation to bring a better future to neglected Ireland; in Italy was still fermenting the *risorgimento*, the revival of the desire for political unity; in Germany and Austria there was growing excitement among the workmen, strikes were the order of the day, and the liberal party, led by professors and journalists, did its best to promote the idea of German union under liberal institutions; in Switzerland Protestants and Catholics opposed one another; in Hungary was the wish for independence of Austria; in Poland came up once more the hope that it would finally succeed in throwing off the foreign yoke. Amidst all this was Holland to remain unmoved? The advocates of the revision of the constitution were not dismayed. Without stirring up popular movements, as their partisans were doing in other countries, they endeavoured to awaken interest for their cause by means of the press and the increasing activity of the electoral unions and by propositions in the Second Chamber. The *Arnhemse*



*Courant*, conducted by Dirk Donker Curtius, urged thorough revision with direct elections and a responsible homogeneous ministry as the first requisites for the future really parliamentary government. On December 10, 1844, eight members of the Chamber joined Thorbecke in a proposal of constitutional revision. The Second Chamber on May 31st declared it was not willing to propose to the government a change in the constitution, and the proposition of the nine men was not further discussed. The liberals were gradually coming together in the cities in electoral unions. Generally they regarded Thorbecke as their leader, with whom the liberal champions Luzac and Donker Curtius enjoyed the most consideration as heirs of the opposition of Van Hogendorp; they believed that safety for the country was to be found only in a timely revision of the constitution in a liberal spirit. But the government was far from consenting to any such revision. There was talk of a "black register," which it kept of all those who were not of its opinion.

Not without reason was there complaint that the government did little. While Belgium covered itself with a network of railroads, while England and the German ports hastened to bring commerce into harmony with the rapidly changing economic conditions under the influence of the development of steam and machine industry, almost nothing was done here in this direction—a great difference in comparison with the energy shown by the government of William I. After an insignificant refusal of the majority in the cabinet council to modify a chapter of the constitution—on changes and additions—Van Hall saw himself obliged on December 19th to offer his resignation, which was accepted before the end of the year. The newly constituted ministry, now relieved of Van Hall, was ready in a few days with its twenty-seven proposals of constitutional revision and presented them on January 9th to the council of state, which gave its opin-

ion on February 21st. This opinion was in slight agreement with the wishes of the king, who looked upon constitutional revision as "our misfortune" and felt himself "betrayed and sold." After ample discussion all was ready on March 7th to be offered by the government to the Second Chamber on its return after the winter vacation. What leaked out caused disappointment to many, and it was evident that there was no chance for what Thorbecke and his partisans desired as guarantees of a parliamentary government, especially direct elections, homogeneous ministries, and dissolution of the Chamber. But the king himself, suffering from a serious disease of the heart and much affected by the departure of his second son Alexander for Madeira in the hope of restoring his shattered health, was not pleased with the whole affair and with nervous anxiety watched the growing movement in various European states, just then turning into a dangerous crisis. Reports came of occurrences in Paris on February 22d and following days. Manifestations made Guizot give way before the increasing opposition of the liberals. The republicans used the insurrection started by the liberals, and soon it was no longer—"Long live reform," but—"Long live the republic." Louis Philippe, surprised by the revolution, signed his abdication in favour of his grandson. The chance of the latter's keeping the crown vanished speedily, and a provisional government assumed authority "in the name of the people." The movement in Germany attracted attention particularly, because the party, taking for its watchword Arndt's saying: *das ganze Deutschland soll es sein*, had not yet given up the hope of uniting the duchy of Limburg more closely to Germany and wished also to join all the Netherlands to the empire after three centuries of a separate national existence. Prussia's treatment of Denmark with reference to Schleswig-Holstein showed the perils menacing Holland, aside from



the possibility that in Belgium the old liking for France might revive.

The king, growing more nervous and influenced by dangerous intriguers, furthermore confirmed in his fear of revolution by news from the German courts, had entered into relations with king Leopold not entirely trusting the future and had reassured him as to the possible attitude of Holland towards Belgium and had promised him support against France. King Leopold gave thanks for the "so cordial and truly chivalrous letter" of his old opponent. Under the impression of the events rapidly succeeding one another, the king was ready to prevent the "conflagration" in Europe from spreading into Holland. He allowed several persons to advise him on what he ought to do, among others the liberal ambassador to England, count Schimmelpenninck, who happened to be over from London. The prince of Orange and prince Frederick saw that it was necessary to go further than the twenty-seven proposals, and Schimmelpenninck offered to form a liberal ministry. At noon of March 13th the king, without the knowledge of his ministers, summoned suddenly the president of the Second Chamber, Boreel van Hogelanden. He informed the president that he had heard how the government's proposals seemed to have made no favourable impression, that now he requested the Chamber "to express its opinions and wishes concerning the modification of the constitution." This surprising resolution made a great sensation, and the ministers, ignorant of the latest facts, decided naturally to hand in their resignations on the 15th. The same evening the king called Luzac, the friend and colleague of Thorbecke. The event was communicated by the king to the assembled ambassadors of the great powers with the frivolous remark that in twenty-four hours he had become from a conservative a liberal. On the preceding evening the "popular mouth" had made itself heard in

a loud manifestation of workmen and boys and on the 16th in a procession with music and torches before the royal palace had shouted the names of the king, Luzac, and Thorbecke, whereupon the king and princes emerged from their palaces and shook hands with the leaders. The populace regarded Thorbecke as the man of the moment, and the *Arnhemse Courant* already spoke of a Thorbecke ministry. The king wanted neither Schimmelpenninck, nor Thorbecke, but Luzac. Somewhat enfeebled in mind and body, Luzac dared not become the head of the ministry and named several men as possible ministers. The Second Chamber, whose majority was still for moderate revision, discussed the king's unexpected request. On the 16th it brought out a report including its wishes in fifteen points. The king signed on the 17th the decree establishing a commission of the constitution in order "with consideration of the wishes of the Second Chamber of the States-General to present to us a complete plan of constitutional revision and at the same time to communicate to us the ideas of the same concerning the composition of a ministry." Donker Curtius, De Kempnaer, Luzac, Storm, and Thorbecke were appointed members of the commission. An end had to be put to the prevailing confusion, and the coming of Schimmelpenninck from England offered the desired opportunity. Count Schimmelpenninck, an aristocratic lord, former member of the First Chamber, ambassador first at St. Petersburg and later at London, and as the son of his father one of the chief personages of the country, desired, in the consciousness of his dignity, not to submit to the decisions of the "commission of lawyers" and had a personal grudge against "the Jacobin" Thorbecke. He wanted a moderate constitution in its main features similar to the British; so only he thought could the crown be saved for the house of Orange. He asked the king in writing to appoint him as "cabinet-former"



for the formation of a definitive "homogeneous and responsible" ministry. The king answered Schimmelpenninck's letter by consenting to his proposal to prepare a "constitution in the main like the British, with those modifications which the nature of our country and the present circumstances require, and by which a position is assured to us similar to that of the sovereign of Great Britain." Thus came about the ministry of March 25th. Its rapid formation was in part the result of disquieting reports concerning a popular rising in Amsterdam on March 24th. Schimmelpenninck became president of the ministerial council and minister of foreign affairs and finance. Thorbecke was excluded.

Meanwhile the commission of the constitution had set to work and sent in on April 11th its work with a report to the king. It bore distinct marks of the mind of Thorbecke, who had taken the lead. It embraced the conditions of a "general" revision of the constitution, giving the common people the idea that they helped in ruling. Direct elections as the best means of securing genuine representation in the local, provincial, and national government, unity and strength of a monarchical authority in general affairs, coupled with self-government of the provinces and communities, complete liberty of church societies and education, full ministerial responsibility, census as basis of the right to vote were the chief points. Schimmelpenninck complained of the "republican colour" of the draught, urged the king to reject it altogether, and finally resigned. Donker Curtius now obtained the lead in the reconstructed ministry. Met by the moderates with mistrust, by the conservatives with aversion, by the united Thorbeckians and Catholics with opposition, the ministry had no easy task. While in the midst of all its difficulties it declined in consideration, the star of Thorbecke rose higher. At the periodical election in July he was again chosen a member of the Second Chamber.

After examining the proposals of the constitutional commission, modified here and there by the council of ministers, the king offered them on June 19th to the Second Chamber. The impression made by them upon the nation in general was very satisfactory. The preliminary report of the Second Chamber (July 13th) gave reason to believe that the proposals would not come out of the parliamentary melting pot unchanged. There were repeatedly notes of modifications of the draught. The twelve proposals were at last ripe for the public discussion, which took place in the Second Chamber from August 16th to 24th. The conclusion was that all the proposals were accepted by a large majority. The First Chamber accepted them from September 6th to 8th almost unanimously. Serious anxiety was still felt with regard to the deliberation over the draught by the Double Chamber. The discussions continued from September 18th to October 7th, but they were of a very moderate character. On the 14th the consideration of the measures for carrying the law into effect was ended and the same day the king confirmed the revised constitution, which was solemnly proclaimed on November 3d. With great gratitude the king recalled, on the 16th at the opening of the temporary sitting, "the happy outcome of the ever dangerous undertaking" and praised the compatriots "for their moderation, for their confidence, and for their attachment to law and order, as well as for their adhesion to the house of Orange." He asserted that the foundations of the government of the state had remained the same, but the arrangement was modified "in accordance with the need of the time." With pride could also the minister of internal affairs, De Kempenaer, declare on the 14th at the close of the session in the government's name that, in contrast with what occurred elsewhere in Europe, the "respected" constitution was "purified" without disturbance, the



kingdom "established upon better foundations," "the material for dissension carefully cleared away." One might well speak of a new period after this revision of the constitution, much more thorough than that of 1840 had been. The system of personal, "fatherly" government, such as William I. had conducted more or less after the manner of the German princes, who mostly had now been compelled to accustom themselves to the restraint of constitutions for their principalities, was now ended for good in the Netherlands. The ministerial responsibility fully introduced had bound the execution of authority to the coöperation of the ministers; the introduction of the right of investigation, amendment, and initiative had assured to the Second Chamber more vigorous interference with the course of the government, with legislation; a more active share in fixing the estimates was granted to the States-General; the direct elections made the Second Chamber a more immediate representation of the people, and its dissolution would afford the opportunity to learn more accurately the wishes of the nation; to provinces and communities was returned the self-government, of which there had been little thought under the previous reign; education henceforth appeared among the various subjects to be cared for by the government; great liberty of organisation was bestowed upon church communities; the colonies were brought more within the view of the parliament and withdrawn from the sole rule of the sovereign; the right of union and meeting could now be allowed in fuller measure to the population politically of age; a number of the articles of the constitution were notably improved and made plainer. Under the revised constitution Holland was to take its place with Belgium, Switzerland, and the Scandinavian countries, with England among the states, which stood at the head in political development, and thus was to remain worthy of its great republican past, when it

had gone to the front on the way to liberty and self-government. The new period of historical development was entered upon with joyful confidence in the future.







## CHAPTER XXIX

### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW INSTITUTIONS OF THE STATE

WITH the introduction of the revised constitution a beginning only was made of what had to be done, and the question arose whether the definitive ministry appointed by the king (November 21st) would be strong enough to lead the further development of the accepted principles. An increasing number of liberals regarded Thorbecke, the real father of the renewed constitution, as the proper man and not Donker Curtius or De Kempenaer. The great majority of the new Second Chamber was liberal, and Thorbecke was recognised as its chief. This result was owing partly to the coöperation of Catholics and liberals. A sad event brought matters temporarily to a stand. The king's appearance in the last year had shown that his heart disease was becoming serious, and trying occurrences had certainly done it no good. Weak and weary he went on March 13th to his beloved Tilburg, where he was wont to seek rest amid very simple surroundings. He was feverish on arriving there and died on March 17th, mourned by the many who had learned to know his captivating personality, by the many he had helped, by the nation which long held him in pleasant memory as the amiable monarch, whose popularity had more than once won a victory over difficulties. The prince of Orange, now king William III., was sojourning in England; he returned on the 21st and immediately assumed the government. There was

anxiety to see how William III., a man thirty-one years old, of whose autocratic leanings and inconstancy rumours were circulating, would commence his reign. Married in 1839 to his literary and scientific cousin, princess Sophia of Württemberg, he had two sons, William and Maurice. To Thorbecke the king did not show himself friendly; it was affirmed that his father had warned him against this man as "dangerous to the dynasty." The States-General went on preparing their activities in April, and Thorbecke at the head of a powerful phalanx of liberal members, as master in the practice of parliamentary life, exerted a great influence on the course of affairs. It was to be expected that the ministry and the strongly organised majority in the Second Chamber would not long stand in opposition to one another without strife. De Kempenaer held the ministry together for some months amid repeated defeats alternating with small successes. The newspapers ridiculed a government that could only enact laws on the pharmacopœia and macaroni factories—as Thorbecke bitinglly observed. De Kempenaer, coming before the chamber with four organic laws, saw them unfavourably received by the majority, and resigned at the beginning of the new session in September, soon followed by the whole ministry. The answer of the Second Chamber to the new king's first speech from the throne urged "unanimity" between government and representation, which did not now exist. What this meant was plain: a Thorbecke ministry was desired by the majority. All attempts to escape it failed one after another. At the end of October the king yielded to the pressure, and the Leyden professor was commissioned to form a ministry, which was effected on November 1st. Thorbecke himself became minister of internal affairs. Thus the path of parliamentary government was finally entered upon. With courage the "ministry of reform," as it was called, took its task in hand, ready to break



any opposition to the "stream of innovation." The new ministers met the States-General proudly. They were without programme, because they reckoned upon the confidence of the in a great majority liberal representation. When Groen van Prinsterer on December 13th demanded "something positive," the governmental leader answered with one of those pithy sayings, of which he possessed the secret: "Wait for our deeds!" The difficulties of labouring with unwilling or inexperienced officials and a sickness of Thorbecke retarded the work of legislation, and the opposition sarcastically asked where the so proudly promised "deeds" were. Van Bosse's navigation laws attracted general attention, taking a step in the direction of free trade by the abolition of differential and transit duties, of stipulations restricting foreign navigation and shipbuilding, and by lowering the tariff on raw materials necessary for this last. The principles of free trade now triumphed in the Chambers along the whole line, the beginning of the end of the protective system. From the shipping laws dates the free trade legislation, which for half a century raised commerce and industry in Holland to a height long unknown.

Draughts of a new election law and a new provincial law were ready in June for public discussion. The fifty-five thousand voters were increased to one hundred thousand. The electoral law was proclaimed July 4th, as was the provincial law two days later. The law on the communities cost longer preparation. Groen, who characterised Thorbecke in these days as the "Napoleon of the law," mockingly set the "central autocracy" over against the local "automatons" and pleaded for "sovereignty in one's own circle." In June, 1851, the law was accepted by a large majority. Thorbecke repulsed victoriously all attacks upon his conduct. He succeeded in finding other ministers to replace several who had resigned. With the reorganised ministry Thorbecke

made ready to secure the passage of other laws. While the ministry by the new laws developed further the principles of the constitution, accustomed commerce and industry as the chief sources of prosperity to new conditions, it had an eye also to the improvement of the care of the poor. The millions expended annually by the more than thirty-seven hundred charitable institutions could not alleviate the grinding poverty, in part on account of the injudicious method of distribution. In the project offered to the States-General at the end of 1851 Thorbecke wanted to bring all charitable institutions, even those of the church, under governmental supervision. The relief of poverty was a state affair. By this arrangement the government came into collision with the very jealous church authorities. With pleasure the Catholics had greeted the Thorbecke ministry. They hoped for his coöperation in obtaining the complete recognition of their rights as citizens and liberty of education as well as of church regulation. Efforts had long been made to arrange here the Catholic church hierarchy in the usual way under bishops and to put an end to the organisation of the "Holland mission," existing for two and a half centuries, under archpriests *in partibus infidelium* and the general guidance of a vice-superior, as a rule the internuncio, an Italian prelate appointed by the Congregation of the Propaganda at Rome and working under its supervision. Slight desire was shown at Rome for the restoration of the hierarchy, from which a diminution of the influence of the holy see was feared, and the powerful orders, Franciscans and Jesuits, dreaded a stronger church organisation under episcopal rule, expecting from it a decrease of their own influence. In 1847 some "notable laymen" asked for the episcopal hierarchy in an address to Pope Pius IX., but found little encouragement in Rome or from the internuncio at The Hague Mgr. Belgrado. In the autumn



of 1850 some Catholic members of the Second Chamber brought the subject before the pope again, pointing out the good chance under the new constitution and the Thorbecke ministry. A great address movement in 1851 showed how ardently many Dutch Catholics favoured the restoration of the hierarchy. The real significance of the measure was not understood in Protestant circles. Its intention was supposed to be the establishment of the papal power in the country; on the contrary with the hierarchy of the bishops the power of the papal inter-nuncio over the Roman Catholic Church in the Netherlands would decrease and go over to the Dutch bishops and chief clergy, so that the Catholic Church would become more independent of Rome. In the fall of 1851 Belgrado received orders from his court to prepare the organisation. He opened negotiations with the Dutch government in a note of December 9th. Not until March 24, 1852, did the ministry report that it was ready to allow everything that could be asked. The Dutch government (October 16th) recognised the liberty of the Catholic Church to revise its organisation in the way that it desired. In the negotiations the Dutch government had repeatedly given notice that it expected a "preliminary communication" concerning the plans to be carried out. This was not the design at Rome; the papal secretary of state Antonelli insisted to the inter-nuncio that the interference of the Dutch government was to be refused in this "purely church" settlement. Rome was ready on December 20th, and it was left to Belgrado to make the "preliminary communication concerning the fixed plan" whenever and in whatever way he pleased, but only as a "simple confidential communication." According to Belgrado's declaration this communication was made January 12th to Thorbecke and two ministers. They denied it, however, and Thorbecke complained later that Rome had only "warned with

the blow." The government did not wish a bishopric in the very Protestant Utrecht or in Haarlem. It expected a more official communication after the private and short announcement of the internuncio. At Rome Utrecht was chosen as the old centre of Christianity in the north. The pope is said to have exclaimed: "Utrecht, the seat of Willebrord! I shall prove to Europe that the Catholics of Holland are not of yesterday." On March 7th Pius IX. held a secret consistory, and in the allocution *Cum Placuerit* he explained to the cardinals the contents of the brief *Ex Qua Die* signed on March 4th. The allocution spoke of the opportunity now offered in Holland and Brabant to restore the hierarchy, which was destroyed three centuries earlier by "hostile man," who "had sowed weeds upon that part of the Lord's ground." Now five bishoprics could be established, Utrecht being named as the seat of the archbishop, with Haarlem, Boisdue, Breda, and Roermond as suffragan bishoprics.

Orthodox Protestants and anti-Catholic liberals complained of the neglect by the ministry of the interests of the "Protestant nation." Soon came the political opposition of the conservative party, which hoped to defeat Thorbecke. In the first days of the month was the "April movement" against the government and the Catholics. Pastors and laymen, church councils and authorities put themselves at the head of the movement, which did not leave the Catholics unmolested on the streets and in the houses, caused Catholic servants to be sent away from Protestant homes, made Catholic shops avoided by Protestants. Holland was divided into two camps. Civil war seemed to be threatening, so that many urged moderation and the Synodal Commission of the Dutch Reformed Church disapproved sharply of the hatred against people of a different opinion. From Utrecht started a stream of addresses. More than two hundred thousand signatures were collected for them in a few weeks; they were



sent to all the churches in the country, offered from house to house, and contained a protest against "the assumption of the title, rank, or dignity of bishop of any part of our fatherland granted by a foreign sovereign." They requested the king not to recognise the bishops and to uphold liberty of conscience against the intolerance of the Catholics. The opening of the session of the Second Chamber on April 13th was anxiously awaited. The government really convinced the majority; a motion of order was passed, by which the Chamber, "having heard, that vigorous representations have been or will be made to the court of Rome," went over to "the order of the day"—a brilliant victory for the threatened ministry. In a sharp speech Thorbecke asserted that the government had received no communication of the plans at Rome, but even if it had been in a position to make known its objections, the pope by virtue of the constitution had perfect liberty to do what he now had done. Thus the government had won the cause in the Second Chamber, but its fate was elsewhere decided. The king was accustomed in the spring to pay an official visit to Amsterdam, and when it was known that this visit would occur on April 11th, rumour had it that a great demonstration against the ministry might take place there. A Protestant-conservative *coup d'état*, directed not only against the ministers and the Catholics but even against the constitution, was feared. The king, who was little pleased with Thorbecke and impatiently looked for an opportunity to get rid of him and his friends, was already in Amsterdam, when the ministry at The Hague was informed of the increasing excitement in the metropolis. It resolved on the 14th to propose to the king, that in case addresses on the restoration of the hierarchy were presented, to answer that such an arrangement needed no approval or recognition upon his part, nor would have any influence upon the interests of other churches

or of the state. This proposition was brought to Amsterdam and impressed the king very disagreeably as a sort of instruction how he was to behave. He seems immediately to have summoned Van Hall, the political leader of the opposition, who was at The Hague. On the 15th twelve members of a committee appeared to offer an address, bearing over fifty-one thousand names and urging the king not to approve the establishment of the hierarchy of the bishops. The king replied that he saw the gentlemen with the greatest pleasure, was deeply penetrated with the importance of the step taken, and amid the many sad moments of his reign found support in the cordiality and childlike love of his people; he ended by declaring that this day had more tightly tied the bond between the house of Orange and the fatherland and had made it dearer to his heart. With this answer, little as it satisfied the committee, as it gave no promise, the king had deviated from the proposition of the ministers. On the 16th the king received Van Hall and offered him the ministry of foreign affairs, as soon as the existing ministry should be discharged. Van Hall accepted the offer under certain conditions, including the maintenance and "honest and loyal execution of the constitution," and the king consented. The ministers, having read the king's answer to the address committee in the newspapers, presented their resignation the same day, unless the king wished to remove the "misunderstanding" by a public declaration. Displeased also by this request, the king accepted the resignations on the 19th. Thorbecke had fallen, not by a parliamentary defeat but apparently by the king's will. Thus his ministerial career had come to a sudden and unexpected end.





## CHAPTER XXX

### CONCILIATION AND POLITICAL DISSENSION

THE great question in Holland was now, how the agitation prevailing in the spring of 1853 was to be suppressed. A policy of conciliation was indicated, although it might not immediately calm the awakened passions. This was the task of the new ministry formed by Van Hall. The dissolution of the Second Chamber was a way of making the nation speak. And the nation spoke. The elections of May 17th brought strengthening to the conservatives, defeat to the Thorbeckians. The new Chamber contained, besides a great number of moderates and conservatives, twelve adherents of the antirevolutionary Groen van Prinsterer; it had a majority composed of conservatives and "Groenians." The watchword of the conservatives was: "Preservation of the existing." Not that they wanted to remain immovably by whatever existed, but they desired slow development, no haste, no extensive change. What distinguished them from Thorbecke and his liberals was more a difference of temperament, of march tempo, than of principles; they wished to go forwards, but with a slow, measured step. Thorbecke and the liberals wanted a brisk advance on the road of progress pointed out by the law of 1848. Three men especially attracted the attention of the nation: Thorbecke, Van Hall, and Groen van Prinsterer. The first, the tall, badly dressed, thin, angular, stiff figure, a man cast in iron, for whom no line of ancestors had

paved his path, who was supported by the faith of no church, the unselfish, the incorruptible, deeply penetrated by earnest love for his fatherland, believing in his calling for his people, the stern scientist, the independent thinker, whose sentences like the blows of a hammer fell mercilessly upon his opponents in parliamentary debate, whose ideas frightened older men by their dogmatic and authoritative form but inspired young men with enthusiasm for his ideal of a society founded on freedom. Opposed to him the tall, lithe, elegant Van Hall, always fashionably and carefully attired, accustomed to courtly etiquette, profound in the secrets of crooked statesmanship, a master of fine eloquence, fond of power, proud, vain of his services to his country, more a clever advocate and smooth debater than a thorough investigator or acute thinker, no man of fixed principles, ready to sacrifice his own opinion to the demands of the moment, respected for his abilities more than esteemed for his character, regarded rather as a necessary evil than honoured as a leader, ready as he always was to quit the conservative line for a more liberal one, whenever it was demanded by his policy characterised as "parasitic." And third in the row was Groen van Prinsterer, the classically formed scholar with fine features, not a statesman but a confessor of the gospel as he called himself, the many-sided dialectician, whose cutting sarcasm and sharp eye for the weak spots in the armour of the opposing party made him a formidable antagonist in debate; his uncommon knowledge and inexhaustible fertility of invention assured him often great success as an orator, when with gently sounding but deeply cutting words he attacked his "esteemed friend from Leyden." He found support in the great mass of the orthodox Protestant population, which honoured him as the champion of Calvinism sent by God, and in the nobility, which saw in him the man of the ardently desired reaction against the "revo-



lutionary" citizen class of 1795 and 1848. In these three gifted personages was incorporated the crisis, which the Dutch people traversed in these years, and after which was to be settled in what direction its further development would move. With Thorbecke and his liberals it would go forward on the road of modern movement; with Van Hall and his conservatives it might take the same way, but slowly and without firm leading; with Groen van Prinsterer it might turn back to paths that seemed long deserted.

It appeared speedily that the government in many respects would not deviate far from the liberal line followed since 1848. The elections of June, 1854, changed the majority into a minority, and the attacks on the ministry obtained a very serious character. The minister of foreign affairs had a hard task, and it was made more difficult by the danger of being involved in the Crimean War, which in aid of Turkey brought England, France, and Sardinia into the field against Russia and threatened to become a general European war. Everything showed that in material things the Dutch nation was going only slowly on the way, which the new institutions of 1848 had opened; if it was to advance more vigorously, then it was necessary for the government to break with the system of protection in the practice of legislation. Intellectually these years are notable on account of the "modern" direction, the newer religious ideas of the Leyden professor Scholten and his friends, among whom his young colleague Abraham Kuenen came to the fore. In 1855 Scholten published his *Historico-critical introduction to the New Testament*, and Kuenen applied the critical principles to the Old Testament. Their sympathiser Robert Fruin in two pamphlets attacked the ecclesiastical-political ideas of Groen van Prinsterer and opposed the results of modern thinking to the dogmas of church orthodoxy, which in the bosom

of the Reformed Church found champions at the university of Utrecht in Van Oosterzee and Doedes, at Leyden in the Walloon preacher Chantepie de la Saussaye. The division of minds came out in the political and ecclesiastical struggle over the school, the relation of which to the government was again brought under discussion by a proposition of Groen van Prinsterer (May 13, 1850). The antirevolutionary leader wanted a request for the establishment of a separate school to be settled within six weeks by the government of the community or by deputies. It was this affair which brought the tottering ministry to its fall. The proposition was rejected by a large majority. A government bill of September, 1854, for regulating elementary education, bore the usual mark of the laws proceeding from this ministry, conciliation of the extremes by giving way to both sides. It maintained the mixed public school, but recognised the liberty of separate instruction. Groen van Prinsterer opposed it with all his might. He demanded liberty of separate instruction, the public school rule, where possible separate for Protestants and Catholics, but never without religion to please the liberals or without the Bible to please the Catholics. It was the beginning of the political school struggle, which for half a century was to occupy so important a place in the political, intellectual, and ecclesiastical life of Holland.

In the ministry dissensions had broken out. Although the elections of 1856 went off with few changes of persons, Van Hall, constantly assailed from all sides, resolved to resign; his colleagues Van Reenen and Donker Curtius followed his example, and so the April ministry really fell (July, 1858). The new ministry had the Groenian Van der Brugghen as leader for the school affair. Groen himself would only take office, whenever his principles had some chance of acceptance, and so far they had not yet penetrated the nation. Van der



Brugghen with his ministry was not strong. His school law was presented (February, 1857), and in it, to the vexation of the antirevolutionaries, the principles of 1806 were maintained with the adoption of the subsidised separate school to be established by law for children, whose parents had conscientious scruples against the neutral mixed school. Violent was the discussion early in July over this law, particularly over the formula: "Bringing up to Christian and social virtues" in the mixed school. The discussion ended on July 20th with the acceptance of the law. Groen, deeply disappointed, resigned at once as member of the Chamber and determined to confine himself to the written exposition of his views, especially in his review *De Nederlander*. The government evidently was not in agreement with the political ideas of the majority in both Chambers and encountered opposition there. Finally Van der Brugghen saw himself compelled to resign. With the passage of the primary education law the ministry's task seemed to be finished, and the way was open for Thorbecke's return to continue the work of reformation. But the ostracism was too strong to allow the liberal leader to come into the government. In March, 1858, Rochussen, the former governor-general, was commissioned to form a ministry. A government of "fusion"—some said "confusion"—between liberal and conservative was announced. Colonial interests were now more in the foreground. The system of cultivation was not touched, as from 1831 to 1853 the mother country had to thank it for over two hundred and twenty-three millions. Though helped by the abolition of slavery in all India on January 1, 1860, the Javanese remained in many places the victims of extortion. The talented official Douwes Decker, as "Multatuli," in his novel *Max Havelaar* (1860), awakened the Dutch nation and made it see the inside of this "girdle of emerald thrown around the equator."

The rejection of proposals for railroads by the First Chamber was fatal to the weak ministry, and it offered its resignation to the king. As Thorbecke was not wanted by the king, the clever Van Hall was again ready to undertake the task. He succeeded in bringing together a ministry—the last, in which the statesman, now almost seventy years old, was to show his ability. A railroad law proposed the building of nine lines by the state and the expenditure on them of at least ten millions a year. This sum was to come from the profit balances of India, thus really from the cultivation system there. The law was enacted, and on August 18th it was confirmed. Van Hall was most sharply attacked by Thorbecke, who spoke of his policy “without constancy, without security for the day of to-morrow, without moral influence but of a very ample conscience, divested of everything but the title of power.” It was plain that a ministry, supported by no party, could not long stand, however adroit its leader might be in “collecting a majority of votes.” At last Van Hall understood that it was time for him to go and offered his resignation, which was accepted (February 23d). He died almost forgotten in 1866 at The Hague. Thorbecke’s time had not yet arrived. His former colleague, baron Van Zuylen, undertook to rule with a liberal ministry. In drawing up the reply to the speech from the throne in September, 1861, the recognition of the young kingdom of Italy was discussed. The Catholics, indignant at the “robber king” Victor Emmanuel for despoiling the pope of most of his states, showed their disapproval plainly. They were estranged from the liberals, and their support of the cabinet was uncertain. Dissension arose in the cabinet itself. Van Zuylen, hated by the Thorbeckians as a deserter, resigned. What was now to happen in the political chess game? The king made every effort to escape a second Thorbecke ministry. But



nobody else was left but Thorbecke. Van Reenen, influential with the king, advised him to commission the liberal leader to form a ministry, and so the man long kept out of office came once more to the fore. It was evident that the king had given way unwillingly, hoping that the statesman, dangerous always to the monarchical power, would be less harmful as a minister than as an opponent and that he would not long be able to steer the ship of state.





## CHAPTER XXXI

### THORBECKE'S LAST YEARS

THE still active statesman, who after nine years took up again the task left unfinished in 1853, speedily found ministers ready with him to resume the work of reform. On January 31, 1862, Thorbecke was appointed minister of internal affairs. He repelled the attack upon the "young" and "inexperienced" ministers with the remark that "for this office also an examination should be established." Soon the conservative opposition began to assert itself, incited by the reappearance of Groen van Prinsterer as a member of the Chamber. Soon again was seen the conflict of principles between the two great champions of liberal and antirevolutionary ideas, especially on the subject of education, of the "neutral" school, opposed by Groen as an "irreligious" school but regarded by Thorbecke as the best guarantee for liberty of instruction and real education of the people in the service of the "neutral" state. With all the self-confidence of the leader the ministry in 1865 was dangerously weak. Treated by the king with conspicuous coolness, supported by the majority with unanimity only on the colonial policy, vehemently assailed by the conservative minority, by many Catholics as liberal no longer considered an ally, it had to contend with great difficulties. There were rumours of dissensions between its members, between the authoritative Thorbecke and the energetic Fransen van de Putte over the latter's colonial plans.



Before long the ministry gave way in consequence of disagreement between Thorbecke and Olivier on one side and Fransen van de Putte on the other concerning legislation in India, the latter holding it might be regulated simply by royal decree, while the first two deemed a definite law necessary. It was evidently the end of a long-standing, personal difference. Thorbecke and Olivier resigned; the "captain" was "thrown overboard" by the younger colleagues, who thought they might introduce the desired reforms without his coöperation, now his lead had failed and his personal qualities had seemed an obstacle to the carrying out of a series of liberal reforms, supported by the liberal majority and rendered possible by an incomparably favourable financial condition. But the old fighter was not so easily to be beaten out of the field. In the liberal party arose a conflict which paralysed its strength for years. While Fransen van de Putte succeeded in bringing together a progressive ministry, Thorbecke appeared in the Chamber for Groningen, thus giving the lie to the assertion that he "longed for rest." The cultivation law was in the foreground, the law directed against the condemned system of Van den Bosch, which was, however, defended by the conservative party and the cautious financiers. The law aimed to assure to the Javanese personal landed property and free labour and to make the waste lands on the island ready for improvement. On May 1st the law came up for discussion in the Second Chamber and in the debate of fourteen days, weakly carried on by Fransen van de Putte recently recovered from sickness, the division of the liberal party appeared plainly. An attempt at conciliation failed and an amendment of the Thorbeckian Poortman against the spirit of article 1 of the law was accepted by a small majority. Thorbecke and some other liberals voted with some Catholics and the entire conservative party against the principles of Van de Putte.

"And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand," was the warning. It was verified on the liberal party, and it could be said that its leader himself had helped to promote the fall of his party. The ministry resigned and for the moment no liberal government was possible. Thorbecke's "old guard" and the younger liberals were not in a condition to lead one. The time had come, for which the conservative party had longed: the government "fell into its lap." The former minister Mijer was intrusted by the king with the formation of the new ministry. He consulted the antirevolutionary count Van Zuylen, who took charge of the foreign affairs. The elections did not attract the attention suited to the great interests at stake. People did not realise that they stood before the choice between old and new, that the time had come for the nation to decide whether it wanted to go on in the line of 1848 or to adopt only in part the principles then accepted. With growing uneasiness the population saw the political complications in Germany, where Prussia and Austria stood opposed so sharply that every moment war seemed inevitable, of which young Italy, impatient to drive Austria from the peninsula, and Napoleon III., desirous of expansion to the Rhine or into Belgium, would gladly make use. With distrust of Prussia's real aims under the guidance of Bismarck notice was taken of the rumours of secret agreements between France and Prussia, by which not only Luxemburg but also Belgium and Holland appeared in danger of losing their independence, and Limburg might come into trouble. While in the summer of 1866 the world events were taking place, which caused Austria to withdraw from Germany and Italy, while there was bloody fighting at Königgrätz in Bohemia, Custozza in Venetia, Lissa in the Adriatic Sea, but Austria's victories over Italy did not make up for its complete defeat by Prussia, a new Germany was soon formed under



Prussian lead, though still divided into a North and South Germany. What had become of the indemnity promised to France in the Rhine district or in Luxemburg or Belgium? What of the concessions to Prussia against the Netherlands? Limburg and Luxemburg remained outside of the new arrangement of German relations according to the peace of Prague, which on August 23d had ended the struggle decided in a few weeks by the Prussian needle gun and Prussian military discipline. Would Holland be able to uphold its independence before the strong neighbour, now next to France the great power of the continent? People began to think of the defence of the country, of the changes in shipbuilding since the use of rams and monitors, of floating batteries and ironclad steamships in the American Civil War and the naval war in the Adriatic.

The ministry astonished the whole country by the report that the minister of colonies Mijer had resigned on September 17th and had been appointed to the influential post of governor-general. Explanation was asked, but the government's answers were not satisfactory, particularly when it resented the interference of the Chamber with the appointment as an encroachment upon the rights of the crown. A motion of disapproval was passed. It attacked the government so seriously that the ministry proposed to the king the dissolution of the Second Chamber for "mistaking its calling." Before the elections set for October 31st the government induced the king to issue a proclamation urging the voters to choose representatives, who would agree with the administration and put an end to the "constant change of responsible counsellors." The proclamation was sent with the ballots to the voters. The purpose was evident to use the attachment to the house of Orange against the liberal party. The exasperation among the liberals was sharp at this meddling of the crown in the political contest.

The result was that some of the best liberals failed to secure election, and the ministry saw the number of its friends increased by only six. The majority showed itself conciliatory, though Thorbecke appeared again in the Chamber to protest against the placing of the "royal authority" in opposition to the "constitutional liberties." In general an "armed peace" seemed to have ended the strife for a time. In the spring of 1867 foreign affairs entered upon a period disturbing to Holland. It was no secret that the sympathy of most Netherlanders in the war just settled had not been on the side of Prussia but rather with Austria. The relation of the king as sovereign of Luxemburg and Limburg to the new North German Confederation was anything but clear. Prussia would not make any definitive declaration on the subject and maintained its garrison in the fortress of Luxemburg on the borders of France. The government of Napoleon III., persuaded to neutrality by Bismarck in 1866 with clever intimations of an indemnity, saw itself after Prussia's victory deceived in its hope of enlargement with German territory. It seemed to be different with Luxemburg, to which Bismarck had directed attention in the first talks between French and Prussian diplomatists, and with Belgium, which he thought might also be obtained, if France boldly pushed forward. The Prussian statesman evidently meant to use France's advance in order to subjugate it in a new war, for which Prussia was ready and France was far from ready. Napoleon, knowing his weakness, did not venture to take hold but tried by negotiation to induce Prussia to evacuate and give over Luxemburg to France, but he was always referred by Bismarck to the grand duke. Thus the French ambassador Baudin at The Hague in February, 1867, began negotiating for the cession or sale of Luxemburg to France, a plan that found willing ears there, as the king hoped in this way to prevent a Euro-



pean war dangerous to his country and further to annex Limburg permanently to the Netherlands as a regular province. But king William III. would do nothing in the affair without Prussia, whose aims he mistrusted. Napoleon III. at The Hague on March 18th proposed an alliance with France in order to defend the possession of Limburg against Prussia, besides the cession of Luxemburg for four to five million francs. But the king, growing more cautious on account of Prussia's attitude, hesitated and declared on the 22d that he could make no sale without consulting the population of Luxemburg and the signers of the treaty of 1839. Berlin answered no questions but privately incited the French ambassador Benedetti to encourage his government to go on its way, while at The Hague it was adroitly hinted that no objection would be made. The still mistrusting William III. consented finally on the 26th and sent the prince of Orange with the desired document to Paris on condition, however, that Prussia should approve officially of the affair. This country refused again, but in the supposition that Luxemburg was already ceded, the fact was accomplished, and France and the grand duke were bound, Bismarck arranged for the influential Bennigsen in the Reichstag to address to him an interpellation on the matter in order to arouse feeling in Germany against France. William III. consented definitively on March 31st, though the signing by the Luxemburg envoy was put off until the following day. On that April 1st Bennigsen made his interpellation, protesting against the cession of any German right or territory to the old enemy. Bismarck answered calmly, but a patriotic movement against France went all over Germany, whereupon at Paris it was declared by the Prussian government that the affair must be postponed and at The Hague (April 3d) that a cession of Luxemburg meant war with Prussia. The king at the eleventh hour retracted his consent just

in time to avoid the dreaded European war, which according to Bismarck's calculation was at the door and, with France's military weakness and Austria's impotence, while England held aloof and Russia looked after its eastern interests, would have gone off favourably to Prussia, which was secretly prepared for any contingency. Napoleon was disappointed at the failure of the negotiation in The Hague and now saw plainly the trap laid for him by Bismarck; making a virtue of necessity, he declared he would be content with the evacuation of Luxemburg by the Prussian troops and neutrality for the grand duchy. A conference met at London, summoned by the grand duke and consisting of envoys from the powers of 1839, with Holland as an interested party besides Belgium and the new great power Italy. In a few days (May 7th to 11th) the conference was ready with a treaty, upholding the rights of the house of Nassau to Luxemburg and declaring this territory neutral for all time "under sanction of the collective guarantee" of the five powers of 1839, while the capital after evacuation by the Prussians must be dismantled. Article 6 of the treaty declared that Limburg should form an integral part of the kingdom of the Netherlands.

Over the Luxemburg question arose dissension in the Second Chamber, and Van Zuylen defended his action. On November 26th his estimates for foreign affairs were rejected, a slap in the face of the leading minister. At once the ministry resigned, and as the king did not want another Thorbecke cabinet, there was no resource but a new dissolution of the Second Chamber. The elections were appointed for January 23, 1868. The result was unfavourable for the ministry; its supporters came back to the Chamber in smaller number, although the united liberals only won a few votes. Thorbecke asked "what great, pressing, predominant interest of the country made the dissolution necessary?" A motion was passed, de-



claring that no national interest had required the dissolution. The ministry, supported by the king's favour, braved this vote some months, but saw again the estimates for foreign affairs rejected. Thus ended the contest of two years with the victory of parliamentary principles over the reaction against those of 1848. The president of the Second Chamber, Van Reenen, did not succeed in forming a ministry of conciliation. So Thorbecke had to be asked, but he and his friends did not think it advisable to take the government in hand. He managed to find a combination of mostly young liberals. The chief subjects to be handled were education and the colonies. The government declared itself unwilling to modify the school law, the intention being to execute it honestly and impartially. Van Bosse presented himself as the head of the government and announced its conciliatory policy. The opposition press ridiculed "Thorbecke's marionettes." Not longer than two years could the Van Bosse ministry maintain itself in the midst of the school contest ever increasing in importance. The elections of 1869 resulted actually in a defeat of the conservatives. The long expected Franco-German war surprised the world suddenly in July, 1870, and still greater was its surprise at the crushing of the French armies in the campaigns of Wörth and Metz, finally of Sedan, where Napoleon III.'s empire went to pieces on September 2d. In Holland the news of the outbreak of war was received with great anxiety. A strict neutrality was desired, and soon the militia was called to arms, the fortresses were put in order, the coast defences were made ready. But the German victories, the confusion in France after the fall of the empire, the inaction of the French fleet, the siege of Paris and the continuation of the war on the Loire and in Brittany, the fall of Strasburg and Metz removed the danger of war from Holland. The mobilisation had shown that army and

navy were very defective in organisation and that extensive reforms were needed in the defence of the country. Several ministers resigned, and it appeared that the ministry could no longer count upon the liberal majority. Even Thorbecke seemed to oppose rather than to support it. What was now to be done? An antiliberal government was not possible against the liberal majority of the Chamber, so finally Thorbecke in January, 1871, undertook the hard task of government, especially hard at his advanced time of life and with the arduous post of minister of internal affairs. But the man of seventy-two did not shun work, though his first ministerial speech showed that he no longer possessed the excessive self-confidence of former years. Speedily it appeared that the younger liberals could not adopt the ideas of the old statesman. The third Thorbecke ministry really did not bring out important measures. Its most noteworthy achievement was the agreement with England regarding Guinea and Sumatra. By the law of January 20, 1872, the possessions on the coast of Guinea were ceded to England; on the other side a free hand was given us in Sumatra. Thorbecke's growing weakness in the spring of 1872 impaired seriously the activity of the ministry, which needed little more to fall. Discouraged by all the opposition, the ministry in May resolved to step out; the resignation was accepted, but it did not yet appear so easy to settle the crisis. While a new liberal combination was being sought, died unexpectedly on June 5th the great statesman, who during more than thirty years had played so important a part in the political life of the Netherlands. The passing of the liberal leader made a deep impression in the country. Government and States-General, newspapers and magazines gave utterance to the general sympathy in the loss, which marked the end of what has been called "the flourishing time of the liberal party" under the working of the



constitution of 1848. Not alone his party, but the nation also displayed sorrow. His opponent Groen van Prinsterer praised his genius and honoured him as “always *facile princeps*.” Thus disappeared from the political stage the impressive figure that for over a quarter of a century had exercised such an important influence upon the government. Thorbecke created the forms, in which the government was to move for a long time; his strong hand had pointed out the way to progress in constitutional development, in material prosperity and intellectual emancipation. His name is bound to the history of this important period; his statue on the Thorbecke square in Amsterdam is the memorial of a remarkable phase of Holland’s national history.





## CHAPTER XXXII

### THE NETHERLANDS ABOUT 1870

THE small Netherlands with only a few million inhabitants could not possibly now play the part of the Seven Provinces in the world, but saw itself relegated to a modest place in the concert of nations with Sweden, Spain, Belgium, Denmark, and other states of the second rank in Europe, while the possession of its colonies alone gave it claims to greater importance than those countries. Between three military and mutually jealous powers it endeavoured to keep out of complications that might threaten its independence or its colonies. The strained relations between Germany and France directed attention to the country's defence, but there was no agreement as to the best means for this. The possession of the Dutch colonies in the East Indies seemed assured by the agreement with England concerning Sumatra. The cultivation system there apparently saw its days numbered and would sooner or later give way to free labour of the native and development of private industry under state supervision. In the West Indies also with the general abolition of slavery on July 1, 1863, reforms were introduced. In colonial matters the spirit of the constitution of 1848 appeared to penetrate, and the old conception was broken that colonies existed only for the benefit of the mother country. In general it may be said that Holland was now governed according to the principles of personal and constitutional liberty, of provincial and



local independence in harmony with the ancient spirit of the people. The greatest difficulty for the government seemed to lie in the wishes of the "clerical" parties, the antirevolutionary party and the Catholic party, wishes relating mainly to education, which they wanted to see directed more towards religion, while the dominant liberals desired to keep religion as much as possible out of the principles of government. There was no danger for a time, as the conservatives also were averse to ecclesiastical influence on education. The liberal party carried out the separation of church and state so far as was feasible.

The nation's intellectual life came more and more under the influence of decided liberal principles. The modern direction in church affairs gave the tone in cultivated Protestant circles. Scholten and Kuenen, Hoekstra and Opzomer were the recognised leaders. De Génestet was the favourite poet, Van Lennep the most appreciated prose writer. In opposition to these was a growing company, which on the basis of the hypotheses of Darwin and Haeckel, of modern natural science, asserted the necessity of going further in independent thinking. Allard Pierson's æsthetic idealism was no longer satisfactory, neither was the merciless criticism of the talented Busken Huet, who with Pierson and other young preachers had turned his back on the real modernism. Multatuli's anticlerical *Ideas* stirred up young minds especially and found admirers on the benches of college lecture rooms as well as at office desks. These young men saw the practical philosophy of the future in Van Houten's heaven-storming book *God, Eigendom en Familie* and Feringa's work *Democratie en Wetenschap*. They thought the centre of a new movement was to be found in the Amsterdam society *De Dageraad* with its atheistic character. The Dutch world of workingmen, which so far had not participated in what was going on since

1848 among the workmen of neighbouring countries, now began to take interest in the efforts for improving conditions and for mutual association. It was chiefly the workers, who had come under the influence of the new ideas and had liberated themselves from ecclesiastical bonds. Trades unions sprang up after the English model, the typographers in 1866 uniting in a general society. As early as 1867 there were reports of strikes among the typographers against the unwillingness of the employers to recognise the union. In October, 1871, at a meeting in Utrecht of trades and workmen's unions was formed the General Dutch Workingmen's League, the Amsterdam furniture maker Heldt being its founder and first president, and it was active in securing higher wages and coöperation. The workmen in this movement were almost exclusively democrats, in religion unbelievers or of modern opinions, growing up as they did in the liberal atmosphere of the neutral public school and under the powerful influence of the ideas of the most advanced radical elements.

Among the Protestant middle class and workingmen the spirit of active opposition began to move against the conquering modern ideas. The antirevolutionary opinions of Groen van Prinsterer found here a fruitful soil, and his name was honoured as that of the champion of orthodoxy against the pernicious modern illumination. With Groen was Da Costa, the ardent poet and apologist of the reformed orthodoxy, whose death in 1860 was a hard blow to his party. His place was soon taken by a young preacher of great talent, Dr. Kuyper, who, a pupil of Scholten, had come under the influence of Calvin's powerful spirit and, called in 1867 as preacher to Utrecht, had begun the fight against the existing organisation in the Reformed Church; two years later he became pastor in Amsterdam and a leader in church activity. Kuyper, master of pen and word, was



the chosen successor of the aged Groen. So about 1870 intellectual life was everywhere manifest: on one side the current going along with the modern conceptions, on the other opposition to the spirit of the century—the first embodied in Thorbecke, the second in Groen van Prinsterer, both combining ecclesiastical with political opinions as so often had been done in Dutch history since the sixteenth century. There was the party of progress, at whose head stood the small group of democratic anticlericals with the aristocratic-conservative elements in the rear-guard, while the moderate liberal middle class prevailing since 1848 formed the nucleus; the party, which in Thorbecke had lost its great chief but hoped for new leaders among his disciples, in politics keeping an eye upon Fransen van de Putte and Kappeyne van de Coppello, boasting in science of the theologians Scholten and Kuenen, the philologist Cobet and the honoured historian Fruin, the Utrecht naturalists Donders, Buys Ballot, and Harting, the Arabist Dozy, the jurists Buys and Vissering, the philologist De Vries, the philosophers Opzoomer, Hoekstra, and Loman, in literature of Multatuli, Huet, Schimmel, Vosmaer, in art of Israëls, the three Maris brothers, Mauve, and Bosboom. Over against the modern world was that of the moderate-orthodox party, the conservative Catholics, and the antirevolutionaries of Groen van Prinsterer.

In material affairs the liberal leaven had permeated the popular life, and liberal principles had been active with more chance of a final victory among the population now risen to over three and one-half million souls. Now that the spirit of protection had given place to that of liberty, of the removal of impediments to private initiative, prosperity had considerably increased, as was shown by the rise in the average duration of life, by the increase from four to eleven millions in savings bank deposits. In the development of Dutch prosperity com-

merce still took the first place. With growing internal industry and better international communication through the powerful action of England converted to free trade, Dutch commerce began again to increase. The repeal of the old Navigation Act in 1849 opened English colonies and England more to Dutch ships. The redemption of the Sound duties (March 14, 1851) helped Dutch merchants, who sent nearly one thousand vessels to the Baltic. The world crisis of 1857, caused in part by the sudden outflow of gold from California and Australia and by wild speculation, did much harm in Holland, after it had passed from America and England to the continent of Europe, but the breaking out of the American Civil War made good some of the losses by the temporary paralysis of the American spirit of enterprise. In all respects it appeared at Thorbecke's death that Dutch popular life was aroused, and it could not be denied that this was to be attributed mainly to the working of the liberal ideas of 1848. But this was only a beginning, and further development was to show whether the Dutch people had successfully been shaken out of the sleep overcoming them immediately after 1830. It was indisputable that in the international struggle for sharing in the advantages of the world's trade Holland commenced once more to take its proper place and in the free competition to regain its old energy.







## CHAPTER XXXIII

### POLITICAL SITUATION AFTER THORBECKE'S DEATH

IN Thorbecke's last years it appeared plainly that there were two currents in the liberal party: that of the older men believing the principles of 1848 not yet ready for further development in social reforms, that of the younger men desirous of applying the old ideas to the rapidly transforming conditions. Groen's followers under the lead of Kuyper stood prepared under the banner of Calvinism to move against the modern view of the state and the world, relying upon the support of the Catholics. A period of violent party strife was approaching between two conflicting conceptions of the world—that appealing to the principles at the basis of the French Revolution, and that opposing them in the name of the ancient Christianity. The old leaders were wanting in this strife, since Groen van Prinsterer on May 19, 1876, had passed from the political stage, upon which he had long played so important a part, spurring his disciples to vigorous opposition to the liberal spirit in state and church, in school and science. Thorbecke's death had left in the summer of 1872 the divided liberal majority in the States-General and among the voters helpless. Van Reenen declined again the crown's offer to form a ministry and suggested G. de Vries, who was now to attempt the settlement of the pending questions. With this ministry of July, 1872, the defence of the country and finances, suffrage and higher education stood in the foreground.

Not much happened and the "parliamentary atmosphere" remained calm. The opposition of the progressive younger liberals weakened the government, so that it often thought of going out of office. The moderate anti-revolutionary member of the Chamber, Van Lynden van Sandenburg, tried by the king's desire to form a mixed cabinet in the summer of 1873, but soon had to lay down the task, and the ministry continued its thankless activity in the "political tournament." In February, 1873, the report came that war threatened to break out with the powerful piratical kingdom of Achin at the north end of Sumatra. Secret efforts of the defiant sultan of Achin to obtain the protection of some great power against our measures to put down piracy caused troops to be sent to Achin to force immediate compliance and to secure our rights to Sumatra against any interference, *e. g.*, of the urgently entreated United States or Italy. Early in April news came that a declaration of war had taken place. The government commissioner Nieuwenhuizen, appearing with four ships in March before Achin, had received only an evasive answer concerning the sultan's secret negotiations now with Turkey, France, and other powers and, being informed of those negotiations, had declared war on the 26th. The small expedition of thirty-six hundred men under general Köhler found an unexpectedly obstinate resistance in Achin; the commanding general lost his life, and the enterprise failed. In November under generals Van Swieten and Verspyck a strong expedition of seven thousand men was sent out. After an arduous march this expedition on January 24, 1874, reached the deserted stronghold of the sultan. Van Swieten abolished the old government of the country after the sultan's death and established the Dutch rule in the stronghold now called Kota-Radja. The enemy had been too lightly estimated, and a complete subjection of the country was not for a time to be thought of. This war



occasioned great expense to the state, and the Chamber showed its displeasure repeatedly.

A month after king William III. had celebrated his twenty-five years of reign (May 12, 1874), when the monarch's popularity contrasted strongly with the growing unpopularity of the States-General, the ministry discouraged by the prevailing indifference in June, 1874, laid down its thankless work. The liberal party, though still a majority in the Chambers, seemed incapable of carrying on the government any longer, disunited as it had become after Thorbecke's death, a "suicide," who on his pitiful deathbed showed only a shadow of his former strength. The hard task in August fell upon the shoulders of Heemskerk, one of the ablest conservatives. With this ministry Heemskerk began anew political life, in which he, an able jurist, a fine judge of men, an experienced executive, not too tenacious of his own opinion, a clever debater, was to have often a great influence on the destinies of the Dutch people—a new Van Hall, but less frivolous. The ministry found among its opponents the eminent young leader of the antirevolutionaries, Kuyper, who loudly proclaimed the principles of his democratic Calvinism, singing the cradle song of the new antirevolutionary party, which was to be supported not mostly upon Groen's aristocratic friends, upon the "men with two names," but upon the "little people." At the defeat of the third minister of war in the spring of 1876 the entire ministry offered to resign, but the king found the recognised leader of the opposition, Kappeyne, unwilling to take office. So the ministry remained, but the elections of 1877 strengthened the liberal party to a majority of forty-eight of the eighty members, and now the days were numbered of the "government from the minority." It had to give way to the opposition against its education policy, and on November 1, 1877, its resignation was accepted. The liberal party now

seemed strong enough to undertake the government led by the able jurist Kappeyne. It was expected that a new period of reform was coming. In connection with reforms was spoken the word constitutional revision as embracing the necessary conditions, under which alone the political and economic condition of the country could be improved. The ministry did not satisfy the advocates of extensive reform measures and could obtain a small majority only for some of its most important proposals. Ever louder grew the complaint among the liberals that they seemed to be able to come no farther than "to the borders of the promised land" of reforms. After the rejection of a canal law Kappeyne offered his resignation, and the ministry declared it would follow him. Amid the political uncertainty one blow after another fell upon the princely house. Queen Sophie, whose home, the House in the Wood, had been for years a centre of interest in art and science, died in 1877. Prince Henry, who after the death of the childless princess Amalia in 1878 had married the Prussian princess Maria, died childless half a year later in Luxemburg, where he had long been stadtholder. In consideration of the condition of the reigning house the king, though well on in years, had already resolved upon a second marriage. He found the young princess Emma of Waldeck-Pyrmont ready to share the throne with him and married her in January, 1879. This event was hailed with joy by the entire Dutch people, the more so as the prince of Orange now thirty-nine years old had remained unmarried, while prince Alexander, his younger brother, weak in body and mind, promised little for the future, and the aged prince Frederick, whose sons had died young, had to see his claims to the throne go over to the descendants of his two daughters, crown princess Louise of Sweden and princess Maria of Wied, who would share the chances of the succession with the progeny of princess Marianne



of Prussia and grand duchess of Saxe-Weimar. News came that the prince of Orange had died suddenly in Paris on June 11th. The death of the crown prince in these circumstances was feared as the beginning of the end of the house of Orange, whose masculine members according to human calculation must pass away childless one after another. Would not the succession by the female line come into another house than that closely connected with the national history, unless the king by his second marriage should have a son? The birth of princess Wilhelmina (August 31, 1880) awakened great joy in the whole nation, now again hoping for long years of continuance of the house of Orange, without which the Netherlands could hardly be imagined.

The king desired an investigation into the extent of the constitutional revision called for by Kappeyne, whereupon the ministry resigned again. An attempt to unite the liberals failed. Nothing remained but to appoint a "ministry of affairs," whose composition was undertaken by the able antirevolutionary Van Lynden van Sandenburg. During four years Van Lynden accomplished his hard task, supported by the confidence of the king. The new government really succeeded in achieving important things. In these years attention was again drawn to the Dutch in South Africa. Since the transfer of the Cape Colony to England in 1806 the relations between the former motherland and the now English colony had never been entirely broken off. In spite of all repression the Dutch language had maintained itself there; Cape young men had studied theology, medicine, and law in the universities of the Netherlands. Then in 1836 came the "great trek," which caused many colonists, weary of the English yoke, to seek new homes across the Orange river and the Vaal in the Kafir territory. After a conflict of years against English and Kafirs two independent Boer republics had finally arisen here, the South African Repub-

lic (1852) and the Orange Free State (1854). Under president Burgers, who led the South African Republic from 1872 to 1877, there seemed a chance of strengthening Dutch influence in this state, as the active president visited Holland with the ideal of establishing a "Great Netherlands" in the south and wanted to encourage on a large scale the emigration of Netherlanders to Africa. But the English government annexed the South African Republic in 1877. The Boers opposed this unjust act under Krüger, Joubert, and the Netherlanders Bok, Jorissen, and Hamelberg, and when no protests availed, the insurrection began at the end of 1880 against the hated British rule, being crowned in 1881 by the restoration of independence as the result of the brilliant victory of Majuba and of the appearance of a liberal government under Gladstone in England in place of Beaconsfield's conservative "imperialists." This insurrection excited enthusiasm in Holland. In May, 1881, the Dutch South African Union was formed at Utrecht with sections all over the country to strengthen the mutual relations. When president Krüger with the fighting general Smit and the superintendent of education Du Toit came in 1884 as a deputation to Europe, they were received cordially, but what the South African Republic most needed, capital, held back timidly. The attempt to place a Transvaal loan failed. Was not this again a neglected opportunity to extend Dutch influence, as in the seventeenth century in Brazil, America, and Formosa? The future was to give the answer.

The clever Van Lynden managed meanwhile to steer the ministerial ship safely past all the parliamentary rocks. With some changes the ministry, sitting fast in the saddle, felt itself called upon to be no longer simply a "ministry of affairs." The minister of colonies consented to the prolongation of a concession to the Billiton Company for mining tin on that island, and this was



disapproved of by the Second Chamber, so that the minister resigned. Soon after the Chamber refused to consider a modification of the electoral law proposed by the ministry, and the whole cabinet resigned. Thus fell the Van Lynden ministry, which owed its origin to the powerlessness of the liberal party to govern. A strong hand was required to put an end to the hopeless confusion in the political relations, if necessary by means of constitutional revision. The eyes of all were turned to the pliant and able administrator, who had once before come to the rescue, to Heemskerk. He formed (April, 1883) an "extra parliamentary" ministry of persons not in the Chambers. About 1880 new elements laid claim to a share in the government. The socialistic Lutheran preacher of Amsterdam, Domela Nieuwenhuis, obtained a growing influence on the working class, especially after he laid down his office in 1879 and as editor of the new paper *Recht voor Allen* stirred up revolutionary antagonism to existing conditions. In the Workingmen's League he and his friends spread the ideas of the International and the social democrats. In May, 1878, under the lead of the smith Ansing, a social-democratic union was established in Amsterdam. It was the modest beginning of a new political party. In 1880 at Amsterdam workmen's candidates were first set up in the elections. Amid democratic and politico-ecclesiastical movements, amid the continued dissensions in the liberal camp and the consequent political uncertainty, Heemskerk held the reins of authority and showed matchless ability not seldom lacking in principle, as many thought. While the ministry kept things going, died (June 21, 1884) the sickly prince Alexander, since his brother's death prince of Orange. The crown princess Wilhelmina was now hardly four years old, and it seemed desirable to arrange the regency for the probable case of the aged king dying before his daughter became of age. This was done by the law of

August 2, 1884, which appointed the young queen as regent. The parliamentary situation grew more and more untenable; even the most unimportant proposals could only be driven through with the greatest difficulty, and people complained on all sides that nothing was accomplished. Constitutional revision appeared the only means of bringing lasting order into affairs. But would Heemskerk be able to make the crown yield and to induce the half-unwilling Chamber to confide the lead to him in this delicate work? The clever minister, not indifferent to the honour of leading this important affair of state, was ready to venture the uncertain chance.







## CHAPTER XXXIV

### CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION OF 1887

THERE was a great difference between the circumstances, in which about 1840 the liberals made the necessity felt of a revision of the foundations of the state, and those of nearly half a century later, when the idea of revision was approached by them. Without enthusiasm the liberal party permitted revision rather than strongly desired it. The antirevolutionary-Catholic-conservative right was no more enthusiastic and demanded as the condition of its coöperation concessions of the liberals on the subject of education. The crown lent its aid unwillingly, dreading a further limitation of its power. Much seamanship would be required, before the leading minister could count upon having brought the ship into a safe harbour. All depended upon whether Heemskerk was the man to bring the parties to a satisfactory compromise by giving and taking. The result was to show that the aged statesman possessed the desired talents. Under the guidance of the active Domela Nieuwenhuis the socialists bestirred themselves, promoted strikes, and attacked royalty, the great manufacturers and landowners, capital in general. Dissensions paralysed for a time the political activity of the antirevolutionary party just as division among the Catholics prevented their party formation. It was to be expected, however, that union would arise between these two parties against the liberal principles. But the liberal party was also divided. On principle it

was not inclined to bind its adherents to a programme. Hence came its inability to make its fractions move together against the other parties and to take advantage of the dissension among its opponents. The need was felt of augmenting its strength by holding together in one bond of party its more conservative, its progressive, and even its radical elements. This was the principle of the Liberal Union of 1885, aiming to unite all those who were averse to the policy of the church parties. The coöperation was obtained of many liberals of all shades of opinion in different parts of the country. Thus the various political parties, though divided among themselves, stood in sharp opposition to one another, and many a man asked anxiously whither this political dissension would lead, if popular social movements should drag this country too into the whirlpool of a social revolution, or if international complications should mix it in the dangers of a great European war, which might come at any time with the ever active spirit of *revanche* in France for the defeat of 1870 and the loss of the provinces Alsace and Lorraine. Nothing more seemed to stand firmly. The old house of Orange appeared about to die out; independence was anything but established against possible contingencies; defence was generally regarded as inadequate; the colonial empire in east and west was apparently approaching its end; domestic politics caused serious apprehensions; the economic condition of rural and factory population left much to be desired. What would the immediate future bring to the Netherlands?

The revision of the constitution, which at least must improve the general political situation and might lay the foundations for the desired reforms, was prepared by the government commission appointed in 1883, as appeared from its report presented January 25, 1884. In agreement with the suggestions of the commission the



government (March 18, 1885) offered twelve proposals of revision. The right declared it would not assist in constitutional revision, unless chapter X., especially article 194, treating of education, were first revised "in accordance with its principles." It expected thus to force the government and the liberals. Did they not need its coöperation to accomplish anything, since by the constitution of 1848 two-thirds of the votes would be necessary in the Chambers to be elected anew after the desirability of considering the proposals offered had been affirmed? While the twelve proposals were debated in the sections and there called out amendments, the government resolved (March 18, 1886) upon public discussion of the amended proposals—after a declaration from the antirevolutionary side that in the final vote over every proposal it would utter a *non possumus*, the Catholics joining in this in accordance with the wish of the right first to take up chapter X. The government proposal on education was rejected (April 9, 1886) after a hard fight and was then withdrawn. The ministry immediately offered its resignation. After the antirevolutionary Mackay had declined to form a new ministry, nothing remained but for the Heemskerk ministry to take matters in hand once more and by a dissolution of the Chamber to seek a change in the representation. The June elections gave a small liberal majority of four votes. New discussion of the proposals was now necessary; it took a long time, owing to the ordinary prolixity, and in part because the bad state of health of the king, at seventy years of age attacked by a serious kidney disease, caused uneasiness. Meanwhile among some members of the liberal party a spirit of conciliation began to show itself towards the advocates of separate education. On the right side also came some hesitation in carrying to extremes the *non possumus* policy, particularly among the Catholics now inclined to a com-

promise. Not until February, 1887, were the proposals again ready for public discussion, which during half a year busied men's minds and put all other things into the background. In the general consideration of the right of suffrage there appeared a great difference of opinion between the advocates of a democratic extension of the franchise and the more conservative elements in all parties. The government's endeavour was to assure the right to vote to the "settled workman" and to have about three hundred and fifty thousand new voters. After a long discussion an article was so formulated that the franchise should be given to those who should possess certain marks of fitness and social prosperity to be determined by the electoral law, and the article was accepted. The number of members of the Second Chamber was put at one hundred, that of the first at fifty. From fear of failure of the whole work the proposal concerning religious affairs was withdrawn. This was not the case with the proposals regarding the much debated tenth chapter, in which occurred article 194 on education. A proposition came in from the Catholic Schaepman making it obligatory to subsidise separate schools in proportion to the number of school-going children in them. In the warm discussion it appeared that the left was no longer so attached to article 194 as formerly, and among the members of the right some favoured conciliation and were ready to take the hand held out from the liberal side. One schoolman considered the article "not worth the paper, on which it was written." After confused deliberations, in which the parties seemed to stand not so far from one another as at first, the amended Schaepman proposition was accepted. Then followed a sharp contest over the additional articles. On June 17th the last proposal was accepted. Thus after fifty-six sittings the "great work" was completed in the Second Chamber, and the president warmly congratulated the



minister of internal affairs, who had spoken more than two hundred times. The First Chamber brought its deliberations to an end from August 4th to 9th. It accepted all the proposals but one. That concerning chapter X. found sharp opposition in the liberal party and was rejected. Now the eleven remaining proposals could be regarded as sufficiently considered to be taken up definitively according to the constitution, which had to occur after the dissolution of the two Chambers. The new elections brought back virtually unchanged States-General. At the end of September the second discussion began. With reference to education something of an agreement was reached, as it appeared that from the liberal side the subsidising of separate instruction was regarded as not entirely impossible with retention of article 194. The right side dropped its *non possumus* finally. After four days of new discussion in the Second and one day in the First Chamber the eleven proposals offered were all accepted. On November 30th the new constitution was publicly proclaimed. Much in the old constitution was improved, and therefore the constitutional revision of 1887 could be considered a work of importance, in the eyes of some the desired completion of the work of 1848, when liberal principles were laid in the foundation of the new structure of the state. In expectation of the result of the first elections under the revised constitution and under the lead still of the statesman who had directed the work of revision, the Dutch nation went on towards the twentieth century.





## CHAPTER XXXV

### NETHERLANDS AT THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

THE constitutional revision of 1887 had brought no extensive change to the arrangement of the state. When the aged king in 1888 again fell into an alarming condition, it was necessary to settle the guardianship for the young successor to the throne. A council of guardianship was appointed of high officers and eminent men, who would stand by the queen-mother, the guardian, in the difficult task soon to await her. In April, 1889, the council of state according to the constitution had to take over temporarily the authority of the mentally disturbed monarch, but, before a regent could be named, the king recovered unexpectedly and resumed the government early in May, until in the autumn of 1890 a violent attack of the disease came upon him, and the physicians declared that in the immediate future he would not be able to handle affairs of state. On November 14th the States-General appointed the queen as regent. With the king's death on November 23d ended the sad uncertainty, which had made a deep impression on the nation; the queen now acted as regent for her daughter Wilhelmina. With how much tact the gifted princess accomplished her task during eight years is still fresh in the memory of the nation, which looks back with gratitude upon these years of the regency, ended with the accession of the young queen Wilhelmina on August 31, 1898, the sovereign, uncommonly popular at home and abroad by



reason of her great gifts of mind and character, who now rules over the Netherlands. Her marriage to duke Henry of Mecklenburg-Schwerin on February 8, 1901, was greeted with joy. With her respected mother and her young husband, the prince of the Netherlands, the queen continued the traditions of her renowned race in a worthy manner, fulfilling exactly her duties as a constitutional monarch and on every occasion giving evidence of her Dutch disposition, of her attachment to land and people, which from the beginning has adored her, the last of the Oranges.

The conflict of parties did not stop after the revision of the constitution. The divided liberal party suffered a defeat by the united church parties in the elections, which had to follow the constitutional revision. The Heemskerk ministry now considered its task done and resigned at the end of March, 1888, when baron A. Mackay was intrusted with the formation of a new government from the victorious coalition. A combination of antirevolutionaries, Catholics, and conservatives was brought together by him. The right side had come to the helm. Over three years this moderate antiliberal government remained in office, not always to the satisfaction of its own partisans. In 1889 the ministry offered a bill to improve the position of the "free school" over against the public school by subsidising the former with obligatory provision of school money also for the latter, and the bill became a law. In the elections of 1891 the liberals won, and the ministry had to go out (August 21, 1891). The liberal majority could now get to work again. The "clerical monsoon" seemed over, the coalition of 1888 had fallen apart. A combination of progressives was formed by the Amsterdam burgomaster Van Tienhoven, who found a number of able liberals to govern with him. Two and a half years this ministry was able to work and in them to bring about reform in taxation.

Tak van Poortvliet's proposed election law destroyed the illusions respecting further coöperation of the liberal fractions. The characteristics of fitness and social prosperity prescribed by the constitution were in this proposal sought in the ability to read and write and to support one's self and family. In this way it was believed that the number of voters would rise from three hundred thousand to eight hundred thousand. To many old liberals this seemed too sudden a leap into the dark, and under Van Houten they began a vigorous opposition to Tak's law. An amendment not desired by the ministry was accepted. After the withdrawal of the law by Tak in the dissolution of the Chamber and the ensuing elections in April a desperate contest arose between "Takkians" and "Van Houtians," the liberal party keeping the upper hand. A ministry from the old liberals had to come to the great vexation of the progressives. The old liberal ministry brought together in May, 1894, by jonkheer Roëll and Van Houten had to settle the election law. In the spring of 1896 the new Van Houten election law came under consideration. It gave the franchise to those, who paid a tax and satisfied certain conditions of dwelling and income. After a sharp discussion the bill was passed with the support of a great part of the antiliberals. There was a cutting up of nearly all parties into groups standing more or less sharply in opposition to one another. In the midst of growing party strife the Roëll-Van Houten ministry approached the election of 1897, which in the first voting seemed to lead to a victory of the church parties and groups, but the later votings assured the majority to the liberals. The ministry of an old liberal colour had to give place to one of a more progressive direction, which was formed by Pierson (finances) and Goeman Borgesius (internal affairs). The new ministry bore the character of a liberal concentration, and the hope was cherished that it might



succeed in making the whole liberal party work together again as a reform party. Indeed it brought out some important laws.

After the investiture of the queen, which ended the regency on August 31, 1898, one of the most notable affairs, with which the ministry had to deal, was the Peace Conference at The Hague assembled upon the initiative of the emperor Nicholas II. of Russia. Its purpose was to limit the alarming increase of expenditures in all countries upon armaments and by arbitration and extension of the international measures adopted at Geneva in 1864 to alleviate the miseries of war. In the old House in the Wood some fifty delegates from the independent states of Europe and Asia besides the United States and Mexico held their meetings from May 18th to July 29, 1899. Their deliberations led to the supplementing of the stipulations of the Geneva Convention regarding the use of arms on land and sea, to the establishment of a permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague, and to the resolution to continue these meetings in the interest of peace. This seemed to make of The Hague again a centre of general diplomatic activity, but disappointed many who had hoped for universal disarmament or the end of all war. This disappointment was all the more, when during the Conference efforts were made by England to subject to English authority the two Dutch republics in South Africa, which had become very flourishing under the presidents Krüger and Steyn and wished to preserve their independence. First to be involved was the South African Republic (Transvaal), where thousands of Hollanders had found a living. The demand of England, whose government early in 1894 had connived at an armed invasion of English freebooters, for a modification of the election law in Transvaal in order to give to the Englishmen temporarily settled there a preponderant influence upon the govern-

ment of the country, supported by a threatening concentration of troops on the frontiers of the Republic, caused the unexpected ultimatum of October 10, 1899, by which the Republic declared it would consider the further disembarkation of English troops as an act of war. Two days later the troops of Transvaal and the allied Orange Free State crossed the borders of Natal and the Cape Colony, where the population of Dutch descent commenced to take up arms. A bitter conflict between the English and Dutch elements in South Africa began, which soon fastened the eyes of the whole world on the two small republics that dared with their slight force to defy the English world-empire. The greatest interest and almost universal sympathy were awakened by the heroic fight of the Boers, who with an army of usually not more than thirteen thousand men in the field, under such leaders as Joubert, Cronjé, Botha, De la Rey, and De Wet, inflicted severe losses on the English troops increased in number finally to two hundred and forty thousand men commanded by generals like Roberts and Kitchener. Not least was this the case in the Netherlands, where since the war of independence of 1880-1881 a growing affection had been shown for the people of the same race, supported by the South African Union. The old hatred of England revived, the memories of the war of liberation against Spain became more vivid, and the thought seemed not too bold of a general European war against the powerful maritime state, in which the Netherlands also would take part. The excitement increased here after the first victories of the Boers at Glencoe, Dundee, and the Tugela in Natal, at Belmont, the Modder River, Stormberg, and Magersfontein in the Cape Colony. But when the conflict continued months and years and the English superiority grew ever greater; when Lord Roberts in a brilliant campaign after the defeat and capture of Cronjé at Paardeberg occupied Bloemfontein in May,



1900, and Pretoria in June; when Mafeking, Kimberley, and Ladysmith were relieved and the only chance appeared to lie in a guerrilla destructive to land and people; when Krüger on the war-ship *Gelderland* sent by the young queen went to Europe and made his hopeless appeal to the powers; when Kitchener from the end of 1900 mercilessly converted the territory of the two republics into a desert covered with blockhouses and wire lines and exposed the poor wives and children of the fighting Boers in the terrible "concentration camps" to hunger, sickness, and misery—then began to sink the hope of a good ending to the war. What could the weak Netherlands do against England? Indignation rose in England, where the national honour was at stake, not only at the stubbornness of the Boers but also at the hostile attitude of the Netherlands. More than once the Dutch government was brought into embarrassment, and diplomatic skill was necessary to prevent the popular passions on both sides of the North Sea from being driven to extremes, so that the English government could find no reason to manifest its displeasure at the attitude of the Dutch people. After two years and a half of tension came peace at Vereeniging on May 31, 1902, which destroyed the independence of the two republics and promised their population in ambiguous words the preservation of their language and their own government. Deep was the disappointment in the Netherlands, where minds now calmed down, though bitterness long continued at the cruel warfare and arbitrary action of the English government. The position of the liberal ministry was not strengthened, while it could not rely sufficiently on the coöperation of all shades of liberals. On the other hand the church parties under the vigorous leadership of Kuyper, Lohman, and Schaepman endeavoured to unite more closely. The "antithesis" arose more and more between the "Christian" and the "paganistic" parties, and the sharp elec-

toral campaign began that was to end in the summer of 1901 with the victory of the churchmen and the consequent appearance of a cabinet from the victorious coalition, this time composed and led by the energetic commander himself, Dr. Kuyper, from whom could be expected, that with more force than the moderate cabinet of 1888 he would apply antiliberal principles to the government of the state, making an end to the liberal "dominion" or, as his friends said, "tyranny," which for over half a century had kept the upper hand in the Netherlands under a liberal constitution. The future was to show whether the liberal party had really had its time and must yield its place to a policy based upon difference in religious conviction.

Despite all objections to the liberal policy, it could not be denied that in the second half of the century the Dutch nation under the liberal system of the constitution has taken a worthy place in material and intellectual affairs. At peace with all states and peoples, gradually becoming the centre of a striving for international coöperation since the Peace Conference at The Hague, in the midst often of fierce political dissension it was able to maintain itself vigorously in the economic and intellectual rivalry of nations. The relations between Holland and its colonies are growing ever closer, and there is a better understanding of what both can be to one another. The General Dutch League (1898), which aims to advance the interests of the Dutch race in all parts of the world and to strengthen the connection of the scattered members of the Dutch nation, keeps the colonies in view. Whoever looks around in the Netherlands is struck by the great percentage of Indian features, a living proof of the intimate relations formed in this half-century especially between the motherland and the regions of India; in the Dutch life, language, literature, art, in the altering character of the nation itself



this influence of Insulinde is plainly marked. Who knows what India may become for the Netherlands, now the connection of centuries is so changed, now there are almost no Dutch families without relations in India, now Indian princes send their children to Holland to be educated, now the Dutch language is made more accessible to the native in India, now government positions are open to him and the foundations of self-government are laid? Will the Netherlands be able to maintain the rich possessions in east and west against attacks from without, against insurrections from within? Some shake their heads doubtingly, but most of the people do not hesitate to continue on the same way, trusting in the old vigour and in the prudence shown during three centuries. That the welfare of the population now risen to over five millions—a gain of two millions since 1849—has increased appears from all sorts of facts, not the least from this, that the average annual increase from 27,600 in 1870 mounted to 46,594 in 1890 and 69,540 in 1897. The average age augmented from thirty-three and thirty-six years about 1870 to forty-two and a half and forty-five years for men and women. The figures of the deaths diminished, those of the births increased, partly owing to the more careful application of hygienic measures in city and country. The general condition of the country progressed especially after 1870, and more care was taken for the physical and spiritual well-being of the poor. In connection with the growing workingmen's movement, with the demands of "social justice" praised by professor Quack and other economists much was done in the Netherlands to meet wants long felt. The watch-word, improvement of conditions by raising of wages, was used successfully by the workmen themselves with the strong support of the General Dutch Workingmen's League. This League opposed the social democratic ideas diffused among the workmen and other classes of the

people. In this way and by the separation of the "Christian" workingmen it lost half of its members, but it persevered in its moderate attitude. The socialists increased constantly in number and influence. The secession in 1894 of the Social Democratic Workingmen's Party was important. Soon numbering thousands the new party succeeded in pushing into the background Domela Nieuwenhuis and his irreconcilable antiparlamentarians and in 1901 put seven of its members into the Second Chamber. Towards the end of the century the foundations were laid of a better understanding between workman and legislator for meeting the demands of the numerous men and women, who mainly in the interest of labour wished to see more considered "social justice" towards the "economically weak."

The great development of commerce and industry at this time in the Netherlands gave reason for not impeding it by oppressive bonds. The number of sailing vessels decreased in contrast to the great development of steam navigation. The sailing vessels numbering twelve hundred and ninety-five in 1873 dropped at the end of the century to less than four hundred, while the steamboats in the same period increased from sixty-one to over two hundred. There was a strong development of commerce in all directions. The trade in the products of India kept pace with the growth of production there. The figures of exports and imports showed since 1850 a triple increase, while the percentage of increase since 1872 amounted to 176 for exports and 165 for imports, far exceeding the augmentation elsewhere, even that of the flourishing commerce of the United States with 144%. In the general commercial movement the Netherlands at the end of the century took the fourth place, recalling the flourishing commerce of the seventeenth century under the abnormal circumstances then prevailing. And Dutch industry did not lag too far behind, although its devel-



opment was not to be compared with that of commerce. In the general extension of commerce and industry at this time it is to be noted that the economic activity of the Netherlands was developed chiefly in the direction of Germany, of the great power, which since 1870 has experienced so remarkable an economic development. Trade with Germany has vastly increased, and Rotterdam and Amsterdam have secured the lion's share of it. The situation of Holland at the mouths of the Rhine assured to its ports an important share of the exporting and importing of the great empire in the east. Satisfactory was the development of the intellectual life in the Netherlands at the end of the nineteenth century. The primary education generally was of a good quality, and the secondary and higher education could compare favourably with conditions elsewhere. The forty-five hundred primary schools in 1896 furnished regular instruction to more than ninety per cent. of the six hundred and fifty thousand children. The educational budget from under seven millions in 1878 rose to over fourteen millions in 1895. The secondary instruction diffused useful knowledge everywhere and was continually extended especially in the way of technical training for the workman awakening from his apathy. The universities, with more students than ever, satisfied generally the scientific needs of the nation and had world-famous names to show in almost every department. Among the world's first scholars were the physicists Van 't Hoff and Lorentz, the astronomers Van de Sande Bakhuyzen and Kapteyn, the orientalists De Goeje and Tiele, the philologist Kern, and the theologian Kuenen. Our historians of the school of Moll and Fruin, though confining themselves to the history of their country, found appreciation abroad. The libraries enjoyed with the old fame of a wealth of books and manuscripts that also of excellent arrangement, good cataloguing, and scientific liberality. The religious life of

the nation remained active. The number of people abstaining from church membership and taking a hostile attitude to religion itself increased considerably at least among the Protestants. The great majority of the nation continued attached to the old church communities, among which the Dutch Reformed remained the most numerous with the Catholics, who could count one-third of the entire nation in their church. The orthodox party predominated almost everywhere, and the moderns were in the minority. The Salvation Army coming from America extended its activity among the lower classes; the new Buddhistic theosophy found enthusiastic adherents. The communities of Mennonites and Remonstrants, in which the modern tendency speedily had the upper hand, saw their importance increase. In the Protestant world of the Netherlands, attached to freedom of thought in religion, the diversity grew greater, in sharp contrast to the powerful unity in the Catholic church. Among the Israelites also modern thought had a strong influence, which shook the adherence of many to the old belief and the old customs. Thus the pulsation of modern life made itself felt also in the old churches, which had long opposed it with more or less power. Political and religious opinions went together in the three chief directions shown in the Dutch nation: the antirevolutionary-Catholic, the moderate-liberal, the progressive. Among the phenomena of modern thinking in the last years of the century came to the fore the woman movement. More people wished an end put to the dependent position of woman in society and to awaken her interest in social and political life; they wanted to break off from what they indignantly called the "slavery" of woman under the authority of man. Shortly after 1870 began the movement for the "emancipation" of woman. Elise van Calcar published three years later her pioneer work: *De dubbele roeping der vrouw*. The movement grew



slowly stronger notwithstanding ridicule and serious opposition. It demanded for these "economically weak ones" protection, soon perfect independence, complete equality in law and society. The urgency for granting the franchise at least to the independent unmarried woman or widow waxed stronger after the establishment of a Union for Woman Suffrage with the coöperation of many progressive liberals and socialists. The movement remained one of the most important, and it could be asserted that in it the Netherlands stood ahead in the world with the United States and the Scandinavian countries.

In art and literature the Holland of the later nineteenth century was notable as well as in science, and according to some enthusiasts an activity was developed there in art placing it above the surrounding nations. The venerable Israëls, the Marises, Mesdag, Mauve, honoured as painters and not unworthy of the fame of Rembrandt, Ruysdael, Van Goyen, Van de Velde, stood at the head of the modern Dutch school of painting, which in many respects needed not to be ashamed of comparison with that of the seventeenth century. Israëls continued the painter of the poor and miserable just as he had begun, considering less the exact drawing and shade of colour than the impression aroused by the presentation, the talented seeker for the "mystery of life, that speaks from the appearance of things"; Jaap Maris ennobled with his rare mastery over line and colour all the objects he touched in his more "impressionistic" art, in which his brothers Willem and Thijs tried to equal him; Mesdag remained the unsurpassed painter of sea and shore; Bosboom imparted spaciousness to his Calvinistic churches; Rochussen drew fine historical figures; the colourist Ten Kate painted old interiors, Bles those of modern times, Bisschop old Frisian ones; Bilders recalled Ruysdael; Alma Tadema, removed to England, was faithful to the

classical world; Mauve and Roelofs painted Dutch cows and pools, Bakker Korff pretty miniatures. Among the younger men Breitner gave Amsterdam canals in winter twilight and waggon horses in city and on heaths; Neuhuys and Sadée, Artz and Blommers with others followed Israël's; Van Borselen, Van de Sande Bakhuyzen and Ter Meulen adhered to Roelofs and Bilders; Bauer drew and etched his oriental pictures; Toorop delighted in philosophical-symbolic figures; De Haas, Nakken, Eerelman, Van Essen, Vrolijk, Stortenbeker, Henriette Ronner painted the animal world; Mauve and the Marises found talented disciples in De Bock and Duchâtel, in Tholen and Poggenbeek, in the winter painter Apol; Haverman and Therèse Schwartz, De Josselin de Jong and Martens, Willy Moes, and Veth excelled in portraits and figures. All formed together a series of remarkable geniuses and talented artists only to be matched in the seventeenth century and counting enthusiastic admirers over the whole world.

After about 1880 new life came into the Dutch literary world, beginning—as the men of the *Gids* forty years earlier—by brutal criticism of the old school of poets such as Ten Kate and Schaepman, of the clear but not artistic prose of about 1870. Only a few writers of this time as Multatuli, who from abroad sowed among the nation his *Ideeën* until his death at Wiesbaden in 1877, as the talented Busken Huet in Paris, who expressed in beautiful language his sharp observations on ancient and modern literature, as the classically formed Carel Vosmaer, the head of the Spectator circle of The Hague, as the Amsterdam Catholic Alberdingk Thijm with his devotion to Vondel and Bilderdijk, as the fearless philosophical critic Van Vloten, as the young Hollander Emants found favour in the eyes of the new men. The sonnetist Perk, the forceful prose writer Alberdingk Thijm Jr. (Van Deyssel), the poetical Kloos, the philo-



sophical Verwey, the bitter critic Van der Goes, the fine-feeling Van Eeden, the artistic Van Looy, fired by their many-sided literary master Doorenbos, took as their aim "art for art's sake" and endeavoured to bring the individuality of the literary art as much as possible to the foreground, in art seeking "the most individual expression of the most individual emotion" and struggling to find new forms for the new Dutch literature, which they wished to develop. After some years of fierce strife against the old, especially against the prolific Ten Brink, they created variously criticised works of importance as Van Deyssel's *Proza*, Van Eeden's *Kleine Johannes*, Van Looy's *Feesten*, Gorter's *Mei*, Helène Swarth's *Sonnetten*. The magazine *De Nieuwe Gids* showed the way they desired to go and gave the tone with the later *Tweemaandelijksch Tijdschrift* and Tak's later socialistic weekly *De Kroniek*. Their endeavour could not count upon general approval and was sharply censured by very many even among the most cultivated as contrary to the demands of good taste and of really fruitful literary development, although it found especially among younger people ardent admiration.

Thus the Dutch nation at the end of the nineteenth century belied the predictions of those, who about 1870, mainly looking at what was backward and small in the phenomena in their midst, mainly struck by what was great in the development of neighbouring peoples, had prophesied its speedy and shameful fall. With honour it occupied a place among the nations, with pride—sometimes with too much pride—looking back upon the past of the seventeenth century, which could spur it on not to lose heart under the much changed circumstances but to strive for further development, for a future, which would not contrast too strongly with that brilliant past. Hopeful and not discouraged by the faults to be seen to-day, it went forwards on the road of the centuries,

firmly resolved to remain true to its past—knowing that standing still, falling behind, and discouragement form the beginning of death, that no people is worthy of liberty, of independence, unless it shows a willingness not only to preserve them but also to employ them both for its own development and for coöperation in that of humanity, the aim of all historical evolution. Nobody can say along what roads the goal is surely and certainly to be attained, but it cannot be denied that there must be a goal to be striven for under penalty of paralysis of activity, of mental and material decline, of inglorious fall. What we see about us inspires us to think that our nation is experiencing a period of vigorous activity, is approaching one of stronger development rather than one of standing still relatively, such as there was during thirty-five years after the first enthusiasm in 1813 for the territory that now forms the Netherlands. With 1848 began the revival of our nation, began a period of preparation, soon of fortunate activity in all ways, with many vicissitudes indeed, but finally in happy expectation of what the twentieth century will bring.









## APPENDIX

### SOURCES OF NETHERLAND HISTORY, 1702-1900

FOR evident reasons the history of the eighteenth century has fewer publications of sources to show in Holland than is the case for the periods previously treated. Considered as a period of national and economic decline, it attracted less interest. Much remains to be published on the eighteenth century. The archives of the house of Orange after 1747, when the hereditary stadtholders ruled the state, should be exploited; relatively few of the important documents there have seen the light. A continuation of Groen's *Archives* deserves to be recommended. Groen's own *Handboek* derives for this time great value from the use, which he, the king's archivist, could make of the unpublished documents. The archives of the council pensionaries can furnish much of importance, and those of Heinsius, Van der Heim, Steyn, and Van de Spiegel are now in the Royal Archives; no less so those of the Fagels, in whose family the secretaryship of the States-General was almost hereditary; useful would be the archives of the two Bentincks of Rhoon, a portion of which is in the British Museum. The publication of the papers of the regents in the possession of their descendants would be of weight for the extension of our knowledge of this time. Also in foreign archives there is much important material for our history.<sup>1</sup> The history of the Spanish Succession war is well cared for. We possess in von Noorden's unfinished *Europäische Geschichte im 18. Jahrhundert* (3 vols., Düsseldorf, 1870-1883) an excellent history; Weber's *Friede von Utrecht* (Gotha, 1891)

<sup>1</sup> See my *Verslagen omtrent Archivalia* in Paris, London, Berlin, and in Italy, those of Uhlenbeck concerning Russia, Brugmans concerning England, Kernkamp concerning Scandinavia.



joins it worthily. But these works are like Wagenaar's *Vaderlandsche Historie* to be regarded more as literature than as sources. Among sources may be mentioned Du Mont's work,<sup>1</sup> containing the great treaties of the time to 1731, the volumes of Lamberty's *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du 18<sup>e</sup> siècle* (2d ed., 14 vols., Amst., 1735-1740), very important for the diplomatic and military history of the time. Of minor sources for knowledge of our diplomatic relations are to be named the *Mémoires* of the French minister de Torcy, who had much influence on French diplomacy. For English diplomacy Coxe's *Memoirs of the Duke of Marlborough* are notable, being distrustful of the republic's government of merchants but compiled from the duke's archives. To them may be added the *Mémoires* of the Frisian statesman Sizzo van Goslinga (Leeuwarden, 1857). The chief military events may best be learned from the *Correspondance diplomatique et militaire du duc de Marlborough, du grand-pensionnaire Heinsius et du thesaurier-général Hop*<sup>2</sup> edited by Vreede, with which are to be compared Marlborough's *Letters and despatches* as well as the *Mémoires* of de Villars, Berwick, and other generals on the French side, especially in the *Mémoires militaires relatifs à la succession d'Espagne*,<sup>3</sup> and the great work *Feldzüge des Prinzen von Savoyen* (Wien, 1876-). Many details can be drawn from the papers reposing in the archives of English aristocratic families now described in the reports of the Historical Commission.

From the peace of Utrecht to 1747 we are not so well furnished. Diplomacy again profits by Du Mont and his continuator Roussel (to 1739). The diplomacy of the Austrian Succession war, so far as concerns the Netherlands, is well shown by De Jonge in his history of diplomacy during that war (Leyden, 1852), and further by D'Ailly's work on Bentinck and by the series of the duke de Broglie's works. Wagenaar and Groen with their study of the sources are of great help. For the

<sup>1</sup> *Corps universel diplomatique du droit des gens*, 8 vols., Amst. et La Haye, 1726-1731, with the completion of De Martens in his *Supplément contenant les traités du 18<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 4 vols., Goettingue, 1801-1808.

<sup>2</sup> Amsterdam, 1850.

<sup>3</sup> Éd., de Vault et Pelet, 11 vols., Paris, 1835-1862.

history of our government and politics we possess data in Slingelandt's famous *Staatkundige Geschriften* (5 vols., Amst., 1784-5), which long passed in manuscript from hand to hand as a sort of secret handbook for the regent, and in the documents given by Jorissen in his *Memoriën van mr. Diederik van Bleiswijk*,<sup>1</sup> further in *Contracten van Correspondentie* of the time published here and there. Data for the history of commerce and industry must be drawn from scattered documents, mainly to be found in the Royal House Archives, the papers of the council pensionaries, and the pamphlet literature<sup>2</sup> of the period. On the intellectual, church, social, and domestic life information is given by the spectatorial writings explained by Dr. Hartog, by the poetry and the social dramas of those days, by the pamphlet literature and the representations in prints and paintings, where many a peep is obtained into houses and markets. Interest has perceptibly increased of late in the second half of the eighteenth century. People begin to see that the patriotic disturbances were not merely an idle manifestation but rather a serious reform movement. For the general history of the period the continuations of Wagenaar compiled by contemporaries can serve partly for sources. They are of very unequal quality and extent; usually they stand as histories far below Wagenaar's own excellent work, which ends with the death of William IV. and in 1759, after ten years, was completed with volume 21. The writer, who had worked on the last volumes with aversion, was unwilling to continue the work. Appointed editor of the city newspaper in 1756, he laid down the post in 1760 and then became first clerk of the city secretary's office, which he continued to be until his death in 1773. In these years he wrote his excellent work on Amsterdam (3 vols., Amst., 1760-1767, with a fourth volume of continuation to the latest time), which with the similar work on Leyden by Van Mieris and Van Alphen may be counted among the best of municipal histories. The importance of Wagenaar's history is shown by its many editions and revisions and by the dispute regarding the author's impartiality and truthful-

<sup>1</sup> *Uitg. Hist. Gen. Utrecht*, 1887.

<sup>2</sup> Most fully described in the *Catalogus van de pamfletverzameling der Kon. Bibl.*, compiled by Dr. Knuttel.



ness, which was begun in 1758 and renewed by the attacks of Bilderdijk and Tydeman, to which Siegenbeek made vigorous answer in 1835. The book has been repeatedly continued, and much confusion results from the similarity in the titles of the continuations. With it stands Bilderdijk's *Geschiedenis des Vaderlands*, of which volumes 10 to 12 are more partisan in colour than the preceding volumes. Bilderdijk's hatred of republican and liberal principles had induced him on his settlement in Leyden in 1817 to give a private course of lectures on the history of the fatherland, which influenced strongly the minds of a small circle of excellent students, especially of Groen van Prinsterer and Da Costa. More than twenty years earlier Bilderdijk had thought of writing such a history. Circumstances prevented progress on the work, and Bilderdijk was later disappointed in his hope of becoming professor at Amsterdam or Leyden. His lectures had only about forty hearers and were from the point of view of the old Orange party. Tydeman persuaded Bilderdijk to let him publish the manuscript of the lectures after his death, and the faithful friend acquitted himself of the task. So arose the *Geschiedenis des Vaderlands*, in purpose and execution a polemical-political essay and as such of great importance. Groen's *Handboek der Geschiedenis van het Vaderland*<sup>1</sup> suffers to a certain extent from the same defect. The *Nederlandsche Jaarboeken* (41 vols., 1747-1765) and the continuation the *Nieuwe Nederlandsche Jaarboeken* (79 vols. to 1798) give colourless accounts of what happened every year and many documents, thus obtaining uncommon value. A peculiar place is now taken by the newspapers and weeklies. While earlier they gave only a slight reflection of what was taking place, like the *Europische Mercurius* (1690-1754) and the *Nederlandsche Mercurius* (1756-1806), they begin about 1780 to appear as the organs of definite political parties. For knowledge of this sort of literature we have much to thank W. P. Sautijn Kluit, who has described most of these writings.<sup>2</sup> Their violent language makes

<sup>1</sup> First edition, Amsterdam, 1846; reprint in 2 volumes, 1852; revision 1872; later editions unchanged.

<sup>2</sup> See his *Nagelaten Geschriften*, ed. Du Rieu, 2 vols., Amsterdam, 1895-96, and especially the complete bibliography to

caution necessary in using data gathered from them; among them may be mentioned the *Ouderwetsche Nederlandsche Patriot* (1781), the *Post van den Neder-Rhijn* (1780-1787), the *Politieke Krayer* (1782-1787), *Janus en Janus Verrezen* (1787-1798), and the *Politieke Blixem* (1787-). Many city newspapers of this time become political organs, as the *Gazette de Leyde*, managed by Étienne and Jean Luzac, which was highly esteemed as a general European organ. Important collections of letters and memoirs appeared concerning—the Utrecht nobleman G. J. van Hardenbroek; Van Lynden van Blitterswijk, representative of the First Noble in Zealand; the Utrecht Orangeman R. M. van Goens; the ardent patriots J. D. van der Capellen tot den Poll and his friends F. A. van der Kemp, Ondaatje, and C. L. van Beyma; G. K. van Hogendorp; his brother D. van Hogendorp; H. Tollius, scholar and publicist; the council pensionary Van de Spiegel, who took so active a part in the events of this time<sup>1</sup>; the authors Wolff and Deken; the Amsterdam burgomaster J. Rendorp, and others. More of a diplomatic nature are the writings devoted to the Dutch diplomatist baron van Kinckel, those of the English ambassador at The Hague John Harris, Lord Malmesbury,<sup>2</sup> and his successor Lord Auckland,<sup>3</sup> of the Prussian diplomatist von Goertz, of the council pensionary Van de Spiegel himself, by which our diplomatic history after 1787 is elucidated very satisfactorily. From the Royal Archives and the Royal House Archives at The Hague, the State Archives in Berlin, Wolfenbüttel, London, and Paris Dr. H. T. Colenbrander, in part following the indications of Blok and Brugmans, collected a large number of documents published by him at the end of his great work *De Patriottentijd* (3 vols., 's Gravenhage, 1897-1899); and thereby important light was thrown on the internal history of the republic as well as on its general politics in the second half of the century. In Dr. D. C. Nijhoff's work on Duke Ludwig Ernst of

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be found after his life in the *Levensberichten, van de Maatsch. der Nederl. Letterk.* 1895.

<sup>1</sup> Vreede, *Laurens Pieter van de Spiegel en zijne tijdgenooten*, 4 vols., Middelburg, 1874-1877.

<sup>2</sup> *Diaries and correspondence*, 4 vols., London, 1845.

<sup>3</sup> *Journal and correspondence*, 4 vols., London, 1861.



Brunswick<sup>1</sup> may be found copious extracts from the duke's papers preserved at Wolfenbüttel. So Dr. I. Mendels collected data regarding Daendels at the end of his work on this turbulent general, and the biographies of Valckenaer and Van Beyma include many an important document. The military history of the Prussian invasion in 1787 was written at the time by von Pfau; that of the war against France after 1793 was compiled from the documents by Sabron. For economic conditions much is to be drawn from Luzac's contemporary work (*Holland's Rijkdom*, 4 vols., 1st ed., Leyden, 1780-1783; 2d ed., Leyden, 1801).

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For a part of the French time we possess a general survey in the *Bijdrage tot de kennis van de historio-graphie der Bataafsche Republiek* by Dr. Jeannette Elias. The resolutions of the States-General for the short time of the continuance of this body after 1795 are only partly printed, especially in a volume of *Resolutiën van H. H. M.* and of the provinces on the formation of a National Assembly, while the journals of the transactions in the meeting of the provisional representatives of Holland, here and there from the hand of Bilderdijk, give a regular account of the proceedings for the chief province. The fortnightly publication, *Jaarboeken der Bataafsche Republiek*, a continuation of the *Nieuwe Nederlandsche Jaarboeken*, contains the principal documents and "notable speeches" of 1798, also printed in the series of *Decreeten van de Nationale Vergadering*. Its transactions are to be read in the unofficial publication of Swart & Co., *Dagverhaal der handelingen van de Nationale Vergadering*. Of the proclamations and publications of the National Assembly and of the kingdom of Holland besides the official edition there exists a "complete collection" from the beginning of the revolution. Further there is the journal of the Representative and Legislative Body of the Batavian people and later the *Notulen* of the State Government of the Batavian republic, 1801-1806. The official *Bataafsche Staatscourant* was followed by the *Koninklijke Staatscourant*

<sup>1</sup> Nijhoff, *De Hertog van Brunswijk*, 's Gravenhage, 1889.

and the *Koninklijke Courant*. The Dutch archives, important for this period of our history, were industriously used by professor G. W. Vreede in his writings on this time.<sup>1</sup> Mention may be made of the works on Schimmelpenninck and Daendels, in which many documents and letters are printed. For the period of Louis Napoleon Wichers gave much from the Dutch archives in his book on that reign,<sup>2</sup> and Jorissen based on archive studies his account of the *Ondergang van het koninkrijk Holland*. A large number of authorities for the period of the liberation were gathered by Jorissen in his *Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis der Revolutie van 1813*. De Bas drew much from the archives of the house of Orange for his great work on prince Frederick, which gives more than the title would lead one to suppose, as the book is swollen to a general history of the whole period. De Bosch Kemper's excellent *Staatkundige geschiedenis van Nederland* devoted to the events of the French time more than a hundred pages, while in the supplementary volume *Letterkundige aantekeningen* many particulars were explained from the sources. The no less important French archives furnished Legrand material for his interesting book<sup>3</sup> on the Batavian republic; the Napoleonic epistolary literature provided data, with which Louis's own work<sup>4</sup> is enriched.<sup>5</sup> Miss Naber drew on the French archives mainly for her *Geschiedenis der inlijving van Nederland bij Frankrijk*. Dr. H. T. Colenbrander began a monumental publication of sources at the instance of the Commission of Advice for the Kingdom's Historical Publications, and his *Gedenkstukken der algemeene geschiedenis van Nederland (1795-1840)* now form two large volumes. Among the works of a biographical nature the

<sup>1</sup> *Geschiedenis der diplomatie van de Bataafsche Republiek*, 3 vols., Utrecht, 1861-65; *Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis der omwenteling van 1795-1798*, 2 vols., Amsterdam, 1851; *Oranje en de Bataafsche Republiek*, Utrecht, 1859.

<sup>2</sup> Wichers, *De regeering van koning Lodewijk Napoleon*, Utrecht, 1892.

<sup>3</sup> *La révolution française en Hollande*, Paris, 1894.

<sup>4</sup> *Documents historiques et réflexions sur le gouvernement de la Hollande*, 3 vols., Bruxelles, 1820.

<sup>5</sup> Jorissen, *Napoléon I. et le roi de Hollande*, La Haye, 1868; Rocquain, *Napoléon I. et le roi Louis*, Paris, 1875; Du Casse, *Les rois frères de Napoléon*, Paris, 1883; the great *Correspondance de Napoléon*.



collection of the letters and memoirs of Gijsbert Karel van Hogendorp deserves the first place; the memoirs of and concerning Schimmelpenninck, Krayenhoff, Dirk van Hogendorp, Verhuell, of a nameless *Nederlandschen beampte*, and others, contain much important information. The works of Sillem on Gogel and Dirk van Hogendorp, of Byvanck on the youth of Da Costa, of Kollewijn on Bilderdijk, of Van Limburg Brouwer on Wiselius belong with this sort of authorities, as they are chiefly composed of contemporary documents, letters, and reports. As sources may be noted the historical relations written by contemporaries at the time or shortly afterwards. The Leyden Remonstrant preacher Cornelis Rogge in 1796 brought out his *Tafereel van de geschiedenis der jongste omwenteling* and three years later his *Geschiedenis van de Staatsregeling voor het Bataafsche Volk*, both full of admiration for the "greatness and majesty" of the people in this "unexampled moment in the history of our fatherland." The former tax official and later surveyor Cornelis Zilleson published at the same time his *Geschiedenis der Vereenigde Nederlanden*, relating events in a moderate unionist spirit. The Mennonite preacher Petrus Loosjes of Haarlem strives for impartiality in his anonymously written continuation of Wagenaar's *Vaderlandsche Historie*<sup>1</sup> running from 1774 to 1806. It is the work of a zealous and conscientious compiler. The Orangist Cornelis van der Aa, bookseller at Haarlem, ventured in 1802 after the peace of Amiens to write his *Geschiedenis van den oorlog* (1793-1802), saying nothing good of the revolution. His life of William V. breathes the same spirit and still more so his book on *De tyrannijen der Franschen in 1747, 1795-1813 in de Nederlanden gepleegd*. Delprat's *Journal concernant les événements politiques de notre patrie* contains various interesting notes and observations on persons and things made at The Hague by this Walloon pastor. Of less importance for the history of the period is Bilderdijk's last volume, in which the fierce Orangist declared he did not wish to bother with what went on "in the so-called Batavian republic." Van Kampen and Bruining give only a brief survey. The unfinished political his-

<sup>1</sup> Forty-seven vols., Amsterdam, 1786-1811.

tory of the Batavian republic by C. L. Vitrिंगa is valuable on account of the use made by the writer of the papers of his father, the federalist Herman Hendrik. The first part of this period is described very generally by Appellius in his anonymously appearing little book *De omwenteling van 1795*. The ardent revolutionist Vonck in his *Geschiedenis der landing van het Engelsch-Russische leger* gave utterance to his aversion to the reactionary elements. Van der Palm's famous *Gedenkschrift van Neerlands herstelling* gives the impressions concerning the liberation period of an able champion of modern ideas. Important for the economic history of this period is Metelerkamp's *Toestand van Nederland in vergelijking gebracht met die van eenige andere landen in Europa*. Data on this subject are to be found in the writings of Van Ouwerkerk De Vries and in some travels of the time, as those of Fell in 1800. First among the authorities of this kind stands the inestimable *Aperçu sur la Hollande* of the French intendant-general baron d'Alphonse after his tour of inspection through the departments of Holland in 1811. A peculiar phenomenon of the years until 1802 is the great importance of periodicals as sources for historical research. Afterwards criticism on existing conditions was taken up again by the pamphlets appearing now and then, but less numerous than formerly, because the governments hostile to revolution succeeding one another hindered the development of journalism so dangerous to reaction.

For the ensuing period we can only refer to a small number of collections of sources, though Belgium has published much on Belgian affairs after 1830. Of official materials we possess in the *Nederlandsche Staatscourant* and the *Journal officiel du gouvernement de la Belgique* (1814-1815) and later in the *Gazette générale*, from 1818 *Journal général du royaume des Pays-Bas*, after the November days of 1813 the documents, proclamations, resolutions, etc., with which from 1821 the *Handelingen der Staten-Generaal* in the *Bijblad* must be mentioned. The zealous director of the *Bijblad* Noordziek supplemented these materials by his edition of the *Handelingen van de Staten-Generaal* from 1815 to 1847. The secretary Luttenberg of Zwolle began the publication of a continuation of the *Groot Plakkaatboek* in his *Verzameling*



*van Wetten* *betrekkelijk het openbaar bestuur* and a very useful register of laws and resolutions concerning the public government, continued by Schuurman and others. The former secretary of South Holland Ten Zeldam Ganswijk published a number of *Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis van het Staatsbestuur* and an alphabetical register of laws and resolutions. As an official collection is to be considered Verstolk van Zoelen's *Recueil de pièces diplomatiques relatives aux affaires de la Belgique en 1830-1832*, also the Belgian *Histoire parlementaire du traité de paix de 1839*. A part of the archives was accessible to the Amsterdam advocate and professor De Bosch Kemper, who used it for his excellent *Staatkundige geschiedenis van Nederland tot 1830* and for his later work on the *Staatkundige geschiedenis van Nederland na 1830*, both enriched with interesting *Letterkundige Aanteekeningen*. Of no less importance are Van Hogendorp's *Brieven en Gedenkschriften*, which with Van Hogendorp's *Bijdragen tot de huishouding van den staat* and his pamphlets form an excellent whole for knowledge of the statesman himself and the circumstances of the time. In the way of biographies there are the letters of Falck, those of Thorbecke (1830-1832), the *Dagboek* of Willem de Clercq noteworthy for the history of literature, and collected by Sirtema van Grovestins the *Notice et souvenirs biographiques* of Van der Duyn van Maasdam and Van der Capellen, later translated as *Gedenkschriften* of these two statesmen. The excellent life of William II. by Bosscha is based upon the archives and the writer's personal recollections. To be mentioned also are the *Vertraute Briefe über das Königreich der Niederlande* of Eleuterophilos, pseudonym of the republican Strick van Linschoten. H. von Gagern published: *Das Leben des Generals Friedrich von Gagern*, who played so important a part in the time of William I.; general Knoop besides some military studies wrote his *Herinneringen aan 1830*. From Thorbecke's papers Fredericq drew materials for his work on Thorbecke's youth. Pierson's *Oudere Tijdgenooten* is important for the history of the intellectual life after 1830. Talleyrand's *Correspondance diplomatique* and his *Mémoires* may be mentioned as sources of the first rank. Not less interesting are the *Denkwürdigkeiten* of the physician and confidant of king Leopold, von Stock-

mar. Among biographical authorities for the history of the time may be noted a number of the *Levensberichten, uitgegeven door de Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde*, which numbered among its members statesmen and literary men of this period, and further the series of Juste's *Fondateurs de la monarchie belge*, in which Rogier, Lebeau, Le Hon, De Brouckère, De Gerlache, Surllet de Chokier, De Potter, Nothomb, and other Belgian leaders are treated of. Lebeau's *Souvenirs personnels*, De Potter's work of the same name, the *Mémoires* of Goblet d'Alviella, of Van der Meere, of Pletinckx and especially Discailles, Charles Rogier, furnish data for our history so closely connected with the first years of the kingdom of Belgium. Besides De Bosch Kemper's great works a number of histories were written in this time. Among them must be named the work of the Belgian Catholic De Gerlache, *Histoire du royaume des Pays-Bas*, that of the moderate liberal young Luxemburg diplomatist Nothomb, *Essai historique et politique sur la révolution belge*, that of the English eyewitness Charles White, *The Belgian Revolution*. De Keverberg in his book, *Du royaume des Pays-Bas*, defended the Dutch government. Much later appeared the *Histoire de la révolution belge de 1830* of De Bavay and the *Histoire politique et militaire de la Belgique* (1830-1831) of Huybrecht, Thonissen's *La Belgique sous le règne de Léopold I.*, Hyman's *Histoire populaire du règne de Léopold I.* and his important *Histoire parlementaire de la Belgique*, besides Juste's more colourless works, particularly *La révolution de 1830* and *Le Congrès National*. Pouillet treated *Les premières années du royaume des Pays-Bas* and *Les débuts de la révolution belge de 1830*. The campaign of ten days was the subject of monographs by Knoop, Wüppermann, and Den Beer Poortugael. Concerning it Nielon's *Histoire des événements militaires* (1830-33) may be consulted on the Belgian side. On the general history of this period we possess from the Dutch side the work of Nuyens, *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche volk van 1815 tot op onze dagen* in Catholic spirit; concerning the Belgian revolution after Bosscha's *Belgische Revolutie*, the book of Colenbrander, *De Belgische Omwenteling*. The affairs of the Roman Catholic church so extremely important for the history of this time found



consideration in the book of the Jesuit Dr. Albers, *Geschiedenis van het herstel der hierarchie in de Nederlanden*; on the Belgian side Terlinden's book, *Guillaume I. et l'église catholique de la Belgique*, is devoted to the whole period from this point of view. For colonial affairs one may consult De Waal, *Nederlandsch Indië in de Staten-Generaal sedert de Grondwet van 1814* and for the Java war the monumental book of Louw and De Klerck.

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For the years of king William II.'s reign we possess the last two volumes of the invaluable book of De Bosch Kemper with the added *Letterkundige Aanteekeningen*. The author through his periodical *De Tijdsgeest* played an important part in the political evolution of these years and was often able to see behind the scenes. His information on the political history towards 1848 was supplemented by the *Historisch-politische Herinneringen* of Opperdoes Alewijn, by Van Randwijck's *Geschiedenis der zeven en twintig Ontwerpen* and his *Iets over de verhouding van Thorbecke en de Katholieken in 1848*, by biographical notices of Schimmelpenninck, the Van Rappards, De Kempenaer, Donker Curtius, and other influential statesmen in the *Levensberichten van de Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde*. Further the extensive literature on Thorbecke and Groen van Prinsterer, besides Gleichman's important work on Van Hall, gave something to be added to what was said in these writings and in the *Handelingen van de Regeering en de Staten-Generaal over de herziening der Grondwet*, together with the *Handelingen van de Staten-Generaal*, for these years also collected and edited by Noordziek, Ising, and others. On the political events of 1848 Thorbecke's *Dagverhaal aan Adelheid* appeared lately (*Gids* of March, 1903), as well as the interesting *Bijdragen tot de kennis van het jaar 1848*, collected by Dr. Colenbrander. With these writings on the constitutional revision of 1848 may be mentioned what is brought out on the Catholic side by Nuyens in his *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche volk van 1815 tot op onze dagen* but above all by Albers in his *Geschiedenis van het herstel der hierarchie in de Nederlanden* mainly from archive

sources. In the half-century following 1848 much is wanting for our enlightenment. The abundant pamphlet literature of the time must be used with great caution naturally, though it gives many a detail that would be hard to find elsewhere. The same is true of the political articles in the great and little newspapers, which after 1869 especially play an important part in the life of the people; these articles cannot be neglected by the historian any more than many of the "contributed pieces" in the newspapers and the political articles in the great periodicals. For this period the journalistic periodical and pamphlet literature is the main source for knowledge of political, economic, and ecclesiastical doings, together with the *Handelingen der Staten-Generaal*, printed in the *Bijbladen to the Staatscourant*, while the laws enacted may be known from the *Staatsblad*. About 1848 journalism acquires here a great importance, which constantly increases. Its influence became stronger, when in 1869 the newspaper stamp was abolished and consequently the establishment of papers augmented greatly: the fourteen newspapers existing in that year had risen to sixty-two in 1894; the number of the weeklies and monthlies climbed in the same period from one hundred and forty-six to seven hundred and sixty. While one thing and another give the impression of growing interest in literary, political, ecclesiastical, and social questions in all classes of the people, the pamphlets of all kinds, anonymous and signed, testify to the same. Towards and in 1848 the stream of pamphlet literature begins to flow abundantly and increases constantly, particularly in times of strong political excitement. The first pamphleteer of the time between 1848 and 1876 was certainly Groen van Prinsterer; his successor Kuyper showed himself in this respect his equal. From the liberal side the answer was not wanting; Fruin and the combative Utrecht professor Vreede proved themselves masters on this ground. But it was mainly liberals and antirevolutionaries, in church matters modern and orthodox Protestants, who made use of this means of agitation, propaganda, or enlightenment. Thus the pamphlets, like the newspapers and periodical articles, may be considered as important sources for the knowledge of popular life in this period, but to be employed with



caution. An invaluable source for political history is to be regarded the great series of the *Handelingen van de Staten-Generaal*, which continually makes us feel the want of such sources for our seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, though by its length it is sometimes the despair of the historian. Much help is afforded by collections taken from or supplementing the *Handelingen*, such as Thorbecke's *Parlementaire Redevoeringen*, Groen van Prinsterer's *Parlementaire Studiën en Schetsen* and *Adviezen in de Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal*, etc., joined to his works especially the *Nederlandsche Gedachten*, such as Wintgen's *Redevoeringen en Adviezen*, and Van Houten's *Vijf en twintig jaren in de Kamer*. De Bruyne has treated this period connectedly in his *Geschiedenis van Nederland in onzen tijd*. On the material and intellectual life much is to be found in the work *Een Halve Eeuw*, in which, on the initiative of the newspaper *Het Nieuws van den Dag*, a number of the most competent writers have given views, impressions, figures regarding the different sides of the life of the people. Further details are to be drawn from the full statistical data furnished by the state or private individuals. Information on the intellectual and religious life is provided by the numerous pamphlets and by larger works of a more historical nature as Allard Pierson's *Oudere Tijdgenooten*, Vos, Groen van Prinsterer en zijn tijd, Pierson's *Verspreide Geschriften*, and Busken Huet's *Litterarische Fantasiën*, *Polemische Fragmenten*, *Nationale Vertoogen*, and *Brieven*. With all this the publication of our sources for this period leaves so much to be desired that often it cannot be considered possible to give more than a general account, as has been done by the author for the later years, sometimes on the basis of communications made to him by persons, who had taken part in the events described, without its being possible always to verify what thus came to him.

# THE NETHERLANDS, 1702-1795.







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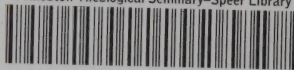
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